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Tall timbers

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Tall Timbers

(Giants in Contrast)

By

CHESLA C. SHERLOCK

Editor "Better Homes and Gardens"

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"And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,
And leaves a lonesome place against the sky."

—EDWIN MARKHAM'S "Lincoln."

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TO

HON. E. T. MEREDITH

THE TALLEST TIMBER I KNOW
AMONG ALL THE TREES YET
STANDING 'GAINST THE SKY

Foreword

WE need to know better the men who have had an uncommon share in making our country truly great; not just the mere names they are on history's page, but the *human beings* they really were. History, in its search for cause and effect, for dates and deeds, has tended to obscure the real man so that he becomes but a name; biography, on the other hand, veers to the opposite extreme and deluges us under a shower of fulsome praise that offends our sense of discrimination.

The eight great Americans presented herein were largely responsible for the history of the country from the inception of the Revolution down to the middle period marked by the Civil War. When judged by the activities through which they gained their principal fame, they are seen to fall into four classes: Practical Philosophers, Soldiers, Statesmen and Popular Champions. Yet when we strip them bare and reveal the men that they really were, what vast contrasts we find in their methods, their viewpoints, their characters!

While it is doubtless true that the things that men do are interesting, especially the things that great men do, I have been much more anxious to

FOREWORD

study the men themselves. I have felt that if we really know a man we know what he will do. To that end, I have followed the method long employed in my own reading—the method of contrasting one man with another that each may stand out the more clearly.

The reader no doubt will find some surprises in these pages for I have no “disease of admiration.” But he will find that there has been a sincere attempt to place the living man before him for what he was, as revealed by his own hand; if the reader comes to know *what* it was that sent the man far, then my humble efforts will be richly compensated.

CHESLA C. SHERLOCK.

Des Moines, Iowa.

2 April, 1926.

Contents

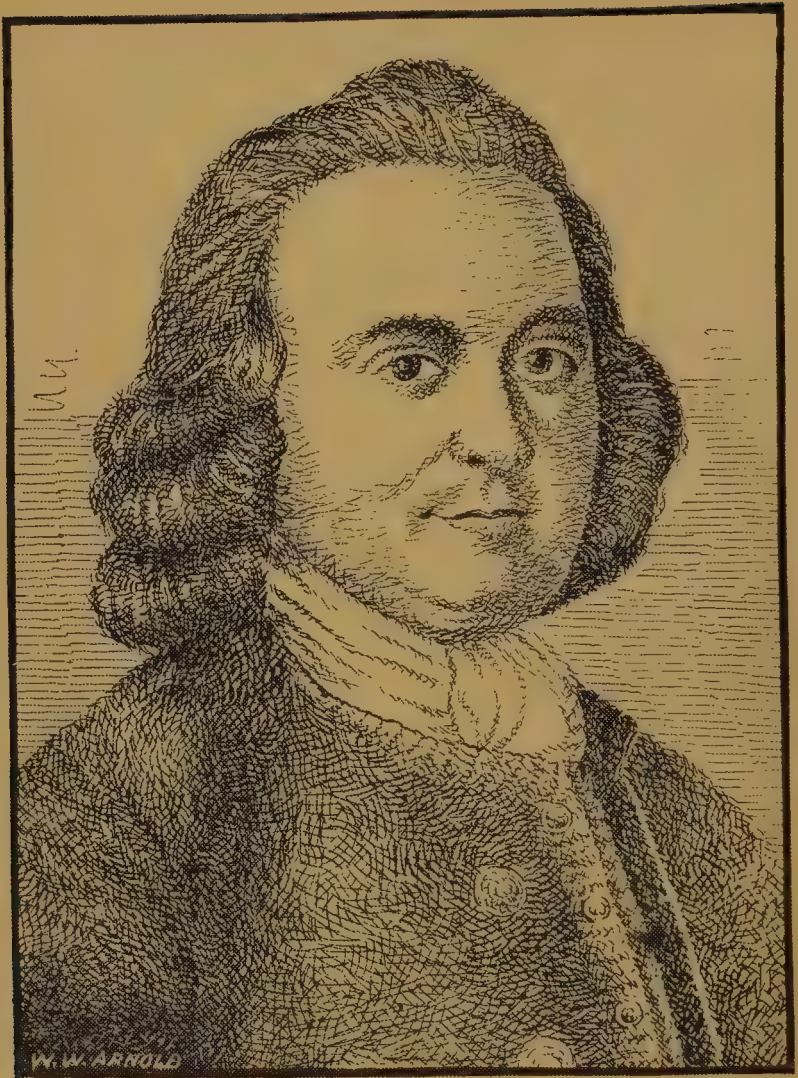
Chapter	Page
I. PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHERS	1
Contrast of George Mason and Benjamin Franklin	
II. GREAT SOLDIERS	81
Contrast of George Washington and Andrew Jackson	
III. STATESMEN	157
Contrast of Alexander Hamilton and James Madison	
IV. POPULAR CHAMPIONS	239
Contrast of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln	

CHAPTER I

Practical Philosophers

GEORGE MASON

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



GEORGE MASON

He possessed the foremost mind of the Revolutionary period,
and was author of the distinguishing features of our
system of government.

GEORGE MASON

I HAVE always liked George Mason ever since I read that story about how he told the "mob" in Alexandria what he thought of them. It was during those stirring days when the fate of a nation hung in the balance, in the midst of the fight over the adoption of the Constitution. Mason and Patrick Henry were leading the fight against its adoption in the Virginia Convention.

Word came to George Mason, then at historic Gunston Hall, his seat on the Potomac, that "he had better not" go to Alexandria for the people there had threatened to mob him for his opposition to adoption. As soon as Mason heard this, he mounted his horse and rode into Alexandria town. Going to the Court House, he said to the sheriff, "Mr. Sheriff, will you make proclamation that George Mason will speak?"

The sheriff did this and soon a large crowd of people gathered around the Court House steps. Colonel Mason then launched forth in a terrific attack upon the Constitution, in which he was unusually bitter and sarcastic in his denunciation. Then he mounted his horse and rode home to Gunston Hall again!

I have always liked him for that although I

haven't agreed with him in his opposition to adoption. It is one of the curious strains we oftentimes find in the characters of strong and extremely wise men, that they should at times make such grievous errors in the general conclusions they reach.

As for that particular contest it is hard, in the light of subsequent history, to dispute a single argument which George Mason brought to bear in arriving at his general conclusion of opposition. Even his fancied fears have been strangely vindicated by the passage of time. This uncanny ability stood him in good stead through all his days. And yet I daresay no one can feel but that the Constitution, even with its extreme centralization of power, has preserved rather than destroyed liberty. Liberty cannot flourish where there is no security, and viewed merely in the light of a scheme for the removal from our midst of petty jealousies and strife, such as destroyed the Greek confederation, it has justified itself.

Who was this George Mason who thus dared to go single-handed into the stronghold of a rival political camp, when feeling and passion were running high and give his enemies a double portion?

Descended from a long line of illustrious sires of the same name, one of whom fled with the cavaliers from England when the cause of the

Stuarts fell, he was born in Virginia in 1725. Thus we see that he was seven years older than Washington. His father, also Colonel George Mason, was a considerable land owner on both sides of the Potomac in Maryland and Virginia. He was drowned by the upsetting of his sail-boat when George Mason, the subject of this sketch, was ten years old.

To his mother, Ann Mason, and to John Mercer, a neighboring lawyer and renter of some of the Mason land, George Mason owes much of his subsequent sagacity and ability. His mother, although widowed young, never remarried but devoted her life to her children. John Mercer was his uncle and it was to him that the lad turned for that companionship and counsel which a boy seeks when there are none of his own age available.

John Mercer's legal training and his library certainly made an impression on the boy, or he never could have excelled in the direction he did, especially when we keep in mind the fact that he was not trained for the law. Such an unusual aptitude for political philosophy, especially such an aptitude for original thought in such an unusual field, is not merely a fortuitous circumstance.

Not a great deal is chronicled of his youth. We begin to hear of him soon after he came of

age. At twenty-three, he was one of five candidates balloted on for the House of Burgesses, receiving ninety-five votes. We can surmise though that he lived the normal life of a young blade of that fashionable and romantic countryside. He doubtless attended races, and we may be sure that he went to the balls.

Two years later an event occurred which shaped a great deal of his subsequent career. That was his marriage to Anne Eilbeck, daughter of Colonel William Eilbeck, a wealthy Maryland planter whose estate adjoined that of George Mason's father. Anne Eilbeck was then only sixteen years of age.

Tradition has drawn a pretty picture of her as the boyhood sweetheart of George Washington, the "lowland beauty" for whom he sighed in 1746 when he was fourteen years of age. Her beauty is prominently mentioned in the records which have come down to us.

A portrait painted soon after her marriage reveals that she had dark eyes and auburn hair, small and delicate features and a very fair complexion. But her beauty of face and form apparently did not compare to her rare beauty of disposition and temperament.

Writing in 1773 after her death, which occurred in her thirty-ninth year, George Mason said of her: "She, it may be truthfully said, led

a blameless and exemplary life. . . . During the whole course of her illness, she was never heard to utter one peevish or fretful complaint, and wholly regardless of her own pain and danger, (she) endeavored to administer hope and comfort to her friends, or inspire them with resignation like her own. For many days before her death she had lost all hopes of recovery, and endeavored to wean herself from the affections of this life, saying that although it must cost her a hard struggle to reconcile herself to the thoughts of parting with her husband and children, she hoped God would enable her to accomplish it; and after this, though she had always been the tenderest parent, she took little notice of her children, but still retained her usual serenity of mind. . . .

“In the beauty of her person and the sweetness of her disposition, she was equalled by few and excelled by none of her sex. She was something taller than the middle size, and elegantly shaped. Her eyes were black, tender and lively; her features regular and delicate; her complexion remarkably fair and fresh, lilies and roses (almost without a metaphor) were blended there, and a certain inexpressible air of cheerfulness and health. Innocence and sensibility diffused over her countenance formed a face the very reverse of what is generally called masculine. This is not

an ideal but a real picture drawn from life, nor was the beautiful outward form disgraced by an unworthy inhabitant.

“Free from her sex’s smallest faults,
And fair as womankind can be.’

“She was blessed with a clear and sound judgment, a gentle and benevolent heart, a sincere and an humble mind, with an even, calm and cheerful temper to a very unusual degree; affable to all, but intimate with few. Her modest virtues shunned the public eye; superior to the turbulent passions of pride and envy, a stranger to altercation of any kind, and content with the blessings of a private station, she placed all her happiness here, where only it is to be found, in her own family. Though she despised dress, she was always neat; cheerful, but not gay; serious, but not melancholy; she never met me without a smile! Though an only child, she was a remarkably dutiful one. An easy and agreeable companion, a kind neighbor, a steadfast friend, a humane mistress, a prudent and tender mother, a faithful, affectionate and most obliging wife; charitable to the poor, and pious to her Maker; her virtue and religion were unmixed with hypocrisy or ostentation. Formed for domestic happiness, and without one jarring atom in her frame! Her irreparable loss I do and ever shall deplore,

and though time will I hope soften my sad impressions, and restore me greater serenity of mind than I have lately enjoyed, I shall ever retain the most tender and melancholy remembrance of one so justly dear."

One cannot read this high tribute without marking the very great influence which Anne Mason exerted upon the life and habits of George. Just how much of it is George Mason and how much Anne Eilbeck is hard to tell, for when we see through the eyes of love, we too often see our own ideal. George Mason doubtless wrote something of himself into these lines which he penned in the family Bible when his grief was heavy upon him. They reflect so much of the character and the disposition of the man, whose strange preferment for the attachments of domestic life to those of a public career was a constant source of wonder to his friends and associates.

Eight years after his marriage, George Mason had completed his new seat, Gunston Hall. It is located a few miles below Mount Vernon on the Potomac. In Colonial times, only Belvoir, the Fairfax estate, separated it from Mount Vernon. Washington and Mason were friends and comrades throughout their lives. Washington himself states that it dated from their youth.

Gunston Hall is situated some distance from

the old pike, the main artery of North and South travel in the old days. The entrance leads one through a native forest, where the road winds through the trees and across rustic bridges. Suddenly, it discharges one into a large, open field and in the distance one comes to another entrance gate, more imposing than the one on the pike. There, the road runs down a broad, grassy parkway and swings in through the trees and circles through smaller gateways to the circular drive leading to the mansion door.

Gunston Hall is not as imposing as Mount Vernon or many of the other Colonial mansions. In fact, the first impression is one of disappointment at its apparent modesty in size and ornamentation. But the more it is studied, and the more we examine the life of the man who created it, the more it truly impresses us.

In the study, where Mason spent much of his enforced leisure; in the garden to the rear, the summer house overlooking the terraced flower garden above the Potomac, the old open well at the side of the mansion house—indeed, the whole picture of the vicinity reflect the home nest of a home-loving man and give an ideal picture of a country gentleman in the fullest sense of the word.

We know, when our feet touch these walks and paths, when we linger in the shade of trees and vines, or muse in the summer house where a room

is found to suit every condition of weather, with what reluctance he tore himself from this happy scene to engage in the affairs of his country.

General John Mason, a son, has left behind descriptions of the wonderfully happy life which the family lived; a life which seems to have approached the ideal of domestic bliss. One cannot read these various references, or catch others from the letters of George Mason himself without seeing reflected a rare quality of contentment and peace seldom met with in American families. Few, indeed, find in the family circle all the gratification their natures demand; too often ambition, if nothing else, enters to break asunder that holy circle.

George Mason's first public service seems to have commenced in February, 1759, when he was elected to the House of Burgesses from Fairfax county. It is entirely possible that he was a member of this body prior to that date but we have no authentic record of it. His service in this connection was not unusual or out of the ordinary; he did nothing exceptional to set him apart. It is interesting to mention in passing, however, that Washington appeared before the House in this February, 1759, and received its thanks for his service with Braddock on the western frontier.

His service in the legislative assembly is apparently the only public service he rendered prior

to the Revolution. It appears not to have greatly impressed him, preferring as he did the attachments of an orderly and domestic life, for in 1773, shortly after the death of his wife, he wrote his will, the first of the remarkable documents coming from his pen which distinguished him for his rare insight into human affairs.

In this will he expressly urged upon his sons "to prefer the happiness of independence and a private station to the troubles and vexation of public business."

George Mason was one of the twenty shareholders who, in 1749, organized the Ohio Company, a colonization and trading project which was the principal cause of the French and Indian War. This company, sending its agent Christopher Gist to establish a trading post at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, came in conflict with French claimants to the same territory. Eventually this friction led to war which caused Braddock's defeat but elevated Washington to a high pinnacle of military fame. It appears that Colonel Washington was a member of the Ohio Company, as well as Governor Dinwiddie and numerous other friends and relatives of both Mason and Washington.

In 1772 Mason engaged in a contest with Washington over the location of the parish church which is interesting to follow. It seems that the

old church had been located some three miles from Gunston Hall and was a frame building. In the year mentioned, it was deemed necessary to build a new church and Colonel Mason was in favor of locating it on the old site. Washington advocated a more central location in the parish. At the meeting where these friends and giants locked horns to carry their points it was impossible to gain a decision and it broke up to meet on another day.

When the day arrived Washington demonstrated that while he might not be as convincing an orator as Mason, he could marshal the facts to support his point. In the interval he had drawn a map of the whole parish on which he had noted the houses of the parishioners. He had made a survey of the whole distance from every house to the old church, and by producing it was able to prove the advantage of the location he proposed. He carried his point and Pohick Church was located midway between Mount Vernon and Gunston Hall, or a distance of five miles from either.

Washington is commonly credited with being the architect of the church but Mason, upon the death of Daniel French, supervised its construction and erection. Pohick Church may be visited today and services are held regularly. During the Civil War it suffered much mutilation, but it has been restored so that one may see the pews the

famous men and women of the countryside occupied. Colonel Mason owned two pews next to the south wall. Across the aisle from him was the pew of Lord Fairfax and adjoining that, the pew of General Washington.

Mason was somewhat fond of speculation but confined such enterprises almost entirely to the purchase of wild lands. In fact, he seems to have kept most of his spare money busy in such transactions. But he was not careless or loose in his finances. Washington testifies to his character in money matters in a reference contained in a letter written to Colonel John Posey in 1767, when Posey was proposing to borrow money from Mason. Washington gave him this insight into Mason's attitude by saying, "He tells you in express terms and with candor that he is waiting for an opportunity to make a purchase which, when accomplished, he must have his money again, giving you three or four months' notice. It is likely, therefore, that he may call for it in six months as in a longer time, because the distress of the country and the number of estates which are daily advertising afford great prospect of purchasing to advantage."

The Stamp Act controversy which lasted for several years before an actual breach occurred in 1775, turned the thoughts of thinking men in the direction of politics and political organizations. While George Mason was not an active member

of the Virginia assembly during this period he took a very great interest in the struggle and was freely consulted by George Fairfax and George Washington, the Fairfax representatives.

Many of his proposals were forwarded to them, which they introduced in the assembly. Thus he came to have a reputation for unusual political foresight and wisdom so that the custom which endured until his death, for the great leaders to repair to his study for consultation, was inaugurated.

As early as 1766, he wrote a letter which was published in the *London Public Ledger* which anticipated by nearly ten years Patrick Henry's famous prophecy in his "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech, that the colonies armed in a just cause would be invincible. Says Mason: "If the ministerial party could influence the legislature to make so cruel and dangerous an experiment as to attempt to enforce the Stamp Act by military power, would the nation have heartily engaged in such an execrable cause, and would there have been no difficulty in raising and transporting a body of troops sufficient to occupy a country of two thousand miles in extent? Would they have had no danger to encounter in the midst of the wilds of America? Three million of people driven to desperation are not an object of contempt." Henry said, in the speech mentioned:

“Three million people armed in the holy cause of liberty are invincible by any force which our adversaries can bring against us.”

He was ever in advance of his time; we later see him in advance of Jefferson, Madison and still later in advance of many others. We find him, for instance, in 1769, heartily in favor of a boycott of British goods in an effort to bring the British ministry to its senses. He foresaw what pressure the trades people would bring to bear upon it when business was affected. He wrote the resolutions on non-importation which were furnished Washington, a member of the assembly, and they were found among Washington's papers. In this respect, Mason anticipated many another occasion when boycotting was to be suggested as compelling favorable action in contests with foreign powers.

A letter written by Washington, dated at Mount Vernon, April 5, 1769, to Mason contains this reference to his scheme: “The more I consider a scheme of this sort, the more ardently I wish success to it, because I think there are private as well as public advantages to result from it,—the former certain, however precarious the other may prove.” And he adds that if Parliament asserts the right to tax, it can just as well assert the right to limit domestic manufactures. He sees also an advantage in encouraging private thrift.

And his hint that our own manufacturing should be encouraged should not be overlooked.

In reply Mason said: "Our all is at stake, and the little conveniences and comforts of life, when set in competition with our liberty, ought to be rejected, not with reluctance, but with pleasure.

. . . It is amazing how much this practice, if adopted in all the colonies, would lessen the American imports, and distress the various trades and manufactures in Great Britain.

"This would waken their attention. They would see, they would feel, the oppressions we groan under, and exert themselves to procure us redress."

The contest was beginning to take shape and form, the issues were beginning to be drawn and to emerge before the public on two continents in distinct form. It was an age of political discussion and writing; the country was flooded with pamphlets, and current thought was turned upon the political and governmental evils of the times.

George Mason, student that he was, naturally found his thinking falling in line with the spirit of the times. But he had great opportunities for sounder and more incisive thinking on the problem than the average man. We have already alluded to his boyhood training at the hands of John Mercer; then his retiring and unambitious nature, his frequent enforced periods of idleness

due to the gout, his dislike for public parades and love for his study—all combined to make possible quiet and constructive thought.

It is extremely doubtful, though, whether he ever would have taken that active place in Virginia affairs he did assume at just the time when his special talent was so needed had it not been for the loss of her whom he esteemed above life itself. I have already referred to his estimate of Anne Mason and the great place she had in his life.

Anne Mason died in her thirty-ninth year in 1773, just when the threshold of great events had been reached. For twenty-three years she had been the center and the purpose of his close retirement at Gunston Hall. He seemed to care for little else than to be near the family circle.

General John Mason has left a fine estimate of his mother and a pretty picture of the family life enjoyed at Gunston Hall. He says: "The last that I remember, of that affectionate parent and excellent woman, is that she took me one day in her arms on her sick bed, I believe it must have been but a few days before her death, and told me she was soon going to leave us all, kissed me and gave me her blessing and charged me to be a good boy, to love and obey my father, to love and never to quarrel with my brothers and sisters, to be kind to the servants, and if God spared me, when I

grew up, to be an honest and useful man . . . and I well remember that I had intelligence and sensibility enough to be aware of the sacredness of the charge, and of the awful crisis in the family it foreboded, that I received it with a swollen heart and fell immediately into a hearty and long cry. . . . I remember that (after the funeral) the house was in a state of desolation for a good while, that the children and servants passed each other in tears and silence or spoke in whispers, and that my father for some days, paced the rooms, or from the house to the grave (it was not far) alone.”

Nearly twenty years later when Mason came to die, the following verses were found in his pocket-book, bearing mute evidence of the hurt which his heart found it impossible to forget. It is not known whether he wrote them himself or whether he copied them from some unknown writer, but they were found in his own handwriting:

“Sweet were the halcyon hours when o’er my bed
 Peace spread her opiate pinions, through the
 night;
 Love scattered roses gently round my head,
 And morning waked me to increased delight;
 Yet every future hour resigned I’d bear,
 Oh could I but once forget what once they were!
 But nightly visions only keep alive
 The fond remembrance of her much-loved form;
 And waking thoughts tend only to revive

The wreck of joys o'er which I mourn;
Alas! what can the honors of the world impart
To soothe the anguish of a bleeding heart."

Just eleven days following the death of his wife, he made and executed his will, mention of which is found above. In it he makes that famous reference to his sons to "prefer the happiness of a private station to the trouble and vexations of public business." But he adds a charge which was soon to become his own call to public service: "If either their own inclination or the necessity of the times should engage them in public affairs, I charge them on a father's blessing never to let the motives of private interest or ambition to induce them to betray, nor the terrors of poverty and disgrace, or the fear of dangers or of death, deter them from asserting the liberty of their country and endeavoring to transmit to their posterity those sacred rights to which themselves were born."

In the spring of 1774, things were rapidly coming to a head. The citizens of Boston had dumped the tea overboard, had been punished by retaliation on the part of the military and Samuel Adams had issued a circular letter to the colonies asking for concerted action. Mason had gone to Williamsburg, the colonial capital, on business and happened to be there when the assembly was

dissolved by the royal governor. In a letter to his friend Martin Cockburn, just four days after his arrival in town, we find this characteristic phrase: "I begin to grow heartily tired of this town and hope to be able to leave it sometime next week, but of this I can't yet be certain. I beg to be tenderly remembered to my children . . ."

In this same letter he gives an estimate of Patrick Henry which is a bit curious to those who have read Jefferson's characterization of him. He says: ". . . I had an opportunity of conversing with Mr. Henry, and knowing his sentiments; as well as hearing him speak in the house since, on different occasions. He is by far the most powerful speaker I ever heard. Every word he says not only engages but commands the attention; and your passions are no longer your own when he addresses them. But his eloquence is the smallest part of his merit. He is in my opinion the first man upon this continent, as well in abilities as public virtues, and had he lived in Rome about the time of the first Punic War . . . Mr. Henry's talents must have put him at the head of that glorious commonwealth."

After the dissolution of the royal assembly, the members repaired to their various counties and called meetings to discuss the emergency and act upon the recommendation of the Massachusetts patriots for a Continental Congress. In Fairfax

county, George Washington presided and George Mason was called upon to present the resolutions. They were twenty-four in number and have come down to us in history as the famous "Fairfax Resolves." They summarized the grievances of the colonies, recapitulated the arguments of the colonists and anticipated some later famous pronouncements on the subject. They are generally looked upon as being the outstanding exposition of the matter up to that time and came to stand as representative of Virginia opinion. Among other points brought out in these "Resolves" the following may be mentioned, for the sidelight they throw upon the claims of the colonists: "That taxation and representation are in their nature inseparable; that the right of withholding, or of giving and granting their own money, is the only effectual security to a free people against the encroachments of despotism and tyranny; and that whenever they yield the one, they must quickly fall a prey to the other.

"That it is our greatest wish and inclination, as well as interest, to continue our connection with, and dependence upon, the British government; but though we are its subjects, we will use every means, which Heaven hath given us, to prevent our becoming its slaves.

"That nothing will so much contribute to defeat the pernicious designs of the common enemies of

Great Britain and her colonies, as a firm union of the latter, who ought to regard every act of violence or oppression inflicted upon any one of them, as aimed at all; and to effect this desirable purpose, that a Congress should be appointed, to consist of deputies from all the colonies, to concert a general and uniform plan for the defence and preservation of our common rights. . . .

“That it is the opinion of this meeting, that during our present difficulties and distress, no slaves ought to be imported into any of the British colonies on this continent; and we take this opportunity of declaring our most earnest wishes to see an entire stop forever put to such a wicked, cruel and unnatural trade.”

It was suggested that a boycott be formed against importation of British goods, and the exportation of certain products. Thanks were rendered to British friends of the colonists, and a recommendation made that the general Congress to be summoned should address a humble remonstrance to the Crown.

Sparks, in his “Life of Washington,” says of these “Resolves”: “. . . they constitute one of the ablest and most luminous expressions of the points at issue between Great Britain and the colonies which are to be found among the public documents of the period. Embracing the great principles and facts, clothed in a nervous and ap-

propriate style, they are equally marked with dignity, firmness, intelligence and wisdom." It is very much worth while to point out that the "Fairfax Resolves" were the only ones containing the hint that the colonies were wholly independent of Parliament and had a free and natural right to make their own laws. So far as history discloses this was the first assertion of independence, in any shade, in this country.

It was during this summer of 1774 that Washington endeavored to persuade Colonel Mason to return to the assembly, but was unsuccessful. Edmund Randolph about this time wrote a letter, the original of which is with the Virginia Historical Society, in which he said: "Among the numbers who in their small circles were propagating with activity the American doctrines, was George Mason in the shade of retirement. He extended their grasp upon the opinions and affections of those with whom he conversed. How he learned his indifference for distinction, endowed as he was with ability to mount in any line; or whence he contracted his hatred for pomp, with a fortune competent to any expence, and with a disposition not adverse from hospitality, can be solved only from that philosophic spirit which despised the adulterated means of cultivating happiness. He was behind none of the sons of Virginia in knowledge of her history and interest. At a glance he

saw to the bottom of every proposition which affected her. His elocution was manly; sometimes, but not wantonly, sarcastic."

The Continental Congress met in September at Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia. Several of the Virginia delegates (Patrick Henry, Edmund Pendleton and Washington) held a consultation with Colonel Mason before leaving. Virginia sent the most powerful delegation possible, intending that they should provide the leadership.

The first thing the new Congress did was adopt a non-importation measure, which had been advocated by Mason five years before. In the meantime, Mason was busy formulating a plan for an independent company of militia for Fairfax county, the first to be formed upon the continent. That completed, he busied himself with a plan to secure the opening of the Potomac for inland navigation by private means, public efforts having failed. He secured the assistance of a large number of Virginians and Marylanders and a meeting was called at Georgetown in November to appoint trustees. Those appointed for Virginia were Mason, Washington, Thomson Mason, Bryan Fairfax, Daniel McCarty and John Carlyle. A bill had been put through the Virginia assembly authorizing the project but work was abandoned a year later when Maryland failed to authorize it.

Thus, the former recluse was beginning to busy

himself with affairs other than those of an immediate personal nature. It is entirely possible that the loss of his wife greatly persuaded him to find relief and surcease from his suffering in public business. Forgetfulness, to an energetic man, is usually found in labor and action. The quiet of the study where events do not absorb one so much, is not conducive to activity and forgetfulness. Many men have thus been brought to the public service by some private misfortune or grief. Fate seems to have a hand in affairs, even though history does hang on great risks at times.

The outbreak of active hostilities between the colonists and the British soldiery revealed two interesting points about George Mason. The first was his patriotic fervor, a quality of enthusiasm not often found among those of the cold, analytical mind. Immediately upon receiving news of the Battle of Lexington, he renamed one of his plantations, "Lexington." The other point was his shrewd sense of business, now that war had broken out, and his prudent eye to the future.

On May 20, 1775, he wrote to his agent in London, notifying him that he had shipped one hundred hogsheads of tobacco, adding: "I expect the certainty of the exports being stopped here on the tenth of September next, if not much sooner, will raise what tobacco gets to market to an amazing price; indeed, was there not this extraor-

dinary cause, I think tobacco must be high, which is my reason for shipping so largely. People in general have not prepared this year for crops of tobacco as usual; and even those who have will be able to make very little, from the uncommon scarcity of plants, greater than in the noted year 1758, or perhaps than ever was known within the memory of man, and the season now too far advanced to raise more."

Shortly thereafter Mason drew up a document for the government of the Fairfax Independent Company (militia) which was the forerunner of the remarkable pronouncements on political liberty he was to make. It contains the germ of his own Bill of Rights and of the Declaration of Independence which was not to be given the world for more than a year.

In it, he says: "We came equal into this world, and equal we shall go out of it. All men are by nature born equally free and independent. . . . Every society, all government, and every kind of civil compact, is or ought to be calculated for the general good and safety of the community. Every power, every authority vested in particular men is, or ought to be, ultimately directed to this sole end; and whenever any power or authority extends further, or is of longer duration than is in its nature necessary for these purposes, it may be called government, but it is in fact oppression. . . .

In all our associations, in all our agreements, let us never lose sight of this fundamental maxim—that all power was originally lodged in and consequently is derived from the people. We should wear it as a breast-plate and buckle it on as an armour.”

When Washington was appointed commander-in-chief of the armies, his seat in the Virginia assembly from Fairfax county became vacant. Mason’s friends urged upon him the acceptance of it, but he wrote to one of them a letter in which he said: “I entreat you, Sir, to reflect on the duty I owe to a poor little helpless family of orphans to whom I now must act the part of father and mother both, and how incompatible such an office would be with the daily attention they require. This I will not enlarge on. Your own feelings will best explain it; and I rely on your friendship to excuse me to the gentlemen of the committee and my other friends.”

George Mason, however, did take his place in the Virginia assembly in July and became a leader of what was known as the “movement party.” Three days after the opening of the assembly, he gave notice that he would introduce a resolution the following Monday. This was a non-importation recommendation and was adopted by a large majority.

In August, he was urged by two-thirds of the

members to accept an appointment in Congress, but he refused. A delegation was accordingly appointed but the next day Bland declined to serve on account of his advanced age. Mason was again pressed to serve and forced to give his reasons before the assembly. It is said this was done with so much feeling as to call tears to the eyes of the president of the assembly. Mason urged Francis Lightfoot Lee in his place, and he was chosen.

In October, in a letter to Washington, he warns against inflated currency in which he says: "I have great apprehensions, that the large sums in bills of credit, now issuing all over the continent, may have fatal effects in depreciating the value, and therefore opposed any suspension of taxation, and urged the necessity of immediately laying such taxes as the people could bear, to sink the sum emitted as soon as possible; but was able only to reduce the proposed suspension from three years to one."

In April, 1776, in another letter to Washington, in which he offers the suggestion that General Howe will retire to Halifax to rest rather than visit New York immediately (he had been driven out of Boston), he says: "You will, perhaps, smile at these speculative and idle suggestions upon a subject which will probably be reduced to a certainty, one way or another, long before this reaches you; but when I am conversing with you,

the many agreeable hours we have spent together recur upon my mind. I fancy myself under your hospitable roof at Mount Vernon and lay aside my reserve. May God grant us a return of those halcyon days, when every man may sit down at his ease under the shade of his own vine and his own fig-tree, and enjoy the sweets of domestic life!"

It happened that Mason's prophecy concerning Howe's movements proved true, even contrary to Washington's own guess.

On the twelfth of June, 1776, George Mason's most prominent constructive service was rendered, in the adoption of the Virginia Bill of Rights, which he wrote. This document, anticipating as it did the Declaration of Independence and the subsequent Constitution, really contains the germ of republican government as set up on this continent. It is, in every respect, the most remarkable charter of human rights and liberty ever penned.

Here we find many of the phrases which have become so familiar in our political literature, and indeed all of the principles underlying our whole political structure. Because of their interest and importance, I set out in full, in the following paragraphs, the Bill as it was presented by George Mason. Some amendments were added before final adoption, but they did not materially change the sense:

“1. That all men are created equally free and independent, and have certain inherent natural rights, of which they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; among which are the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

“2. That all power is by God and Nature vested in, and consequently derived from, the people; that magistrates are their trustees and servants, and at all times amenable to them.

“3. That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection and security of the people, nation, or community. Of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety, and is most effectually secured against the danger of mal-administration; and that whenever any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community hath an indutiabable, unalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it, in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

“4. That no man, or set of men, are entitled to exclusive or separate emoluments or privileges from the community, but in consideration of public services; which not being descendible, neither ought the offices of magistrate, legislator or judge to be hereditary.

“5. That the legislative and executive powers of the State should be separate and distinct from the judicial; and that the members of the two first may be restrained from oppression by feeling and

participating the burthens of the people, they should, at fixed periods, be reduced to a private station, and return into that body from which they were originally taken, and the vacancies be supplied by frequent, certain, and regular elections.

“6. The elections of members to serve as representatives of the people in the legislature ought to be free, and that all men, having sufficient evidence of permanent, common interest with and attachment to the community, have the right of suffrage, and cannot be taxed, or deprived of their property for public uses, without their consent, or that of their representatives so elected, nor bound by any law to which they have not, in like manner, assented for the common good.

“7. That all power of suspending laws, or the execution of laws, by any authority, without consent of the representatives of the people, is injurious to their rights, and ought not to be exercised.

“8. That in all capital or criminal prosecutions, a man hath the right to demand the cause and nature of his accusation, to be confronted with the accusers and the witnesses, to call for evidence in his favor, and to a speedy trial by an impartial jury of his vicinage, without whose unanimous consent he cannot be found guilty, nor can he be compelled to give evidence against himself; and that no man be deprived of his liberty, except by the law of the land or the judgment of his peers.

“9. That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

“10. That in controversies respecting property, and in suits between man and man, the ancient

trial by jury is preferable to any other, and to be held sacred.

“11. That the freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained but by despotic governments.

“12. That a well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defence of a free State; that standing armies in time of peace should be avoided, as dangerous to liberty; and that in all cases, the military should be under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.

“13. That no free government, or the blessing of liberty, can be preserved to any people but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles.

“14. That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, that all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, unpunished and unrestrained by the magistrate, unless, under color of religion, any man disturb the peace, the happiness, or the safety of society. And that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love and charity towards each other.”

While every article quoted above outlines the structure and form of the subsequent type of government to be adopted in this country, I want to call special attention to the fourth. That article

anticipated and answered in the most conclusive manner the argument in favor of the hereditary form of government. It has been said that this article, if all other knowledge of the art of government were lost, "would rekindle the flame of liberty."

Henry Lee, in his "Remarks on Jefferson," p. 127, says: "Mr. Jefferson as a lawgiver was far inferior to a man whom in popular favor and public honors he far outstripped. This man was George Mason. There is more wisdom, more condensation of thought and energy of reasoning in a single clause of the Virginia Bill of Rights from the pen of that truly great man than in all the works of Mr. Jefferson put together. (He then quotes the fourth article mentioned above.) Here is a volume of wit and wisdom for the study of nations embodied in a single sentence and expressed in the plainest language. If a deluge of despotism should sweep over the world and destroy those institutions under which freedom is yet protected, sweeping into oblivion every vestige of their remembrance among men, could this single sentence of Mason's be preserved it would be sufficient to rekindle the flame of liberty and revive the race of freemen."

And Grigsby, in his work on the "Virginia Convention of 1776," p. 165, says, comparing the Bill with another famous document, that the one "as

the admirable work of the political philosopher, the other the chaste production of the elegant historian; and as philosophy is of higher dignity than history, so is the Declaration of Rights superior to the Declaration of Independence."

Mason followed the Bill of Rights almost immediately with the draft for the Virginia Constitution, the first to be formulated upon this continent. It provided the machinery for safeguarding the principles laid down in the Bill of Rights. Of course, it is natural that the authorship of such important documents should be questioned with the passage of time. But there can be no question of this. Jefferson expressly refuted it before his death, and so did Madison, as well as others.

Grigsby comments on another feature of Mason's service, saying: "It is to the wisdom of Mason we owe the great American principle, that the legislature, the most dangerous of all, should be bound by a rule as stringent as the executive and the judicial. Even in a republic the legislature might still have been supreme. It is therefore the peculiar honor of Mason that he not only drafted the first regular plan of government of a sovereign state, but circumscribed the different departments by limits which they may not transcend."

Jefferson leaves this picture of Mason among

his writings: "I had many occasional and strenuous coadjutors in debate and one most steadfast, able, and zealous, who was himself a host. This was George Mason, a man of the first order of wisdom among those who acted on the theatre of the Revolution, of expansive mind, profound judgment, cogent in argument, learned in the lore of our former constitution, and earnest for the republican change on democratic principles. His elocution was neither flowing nor smooth, but his language was strong, his manner most impressive, and strengthened by a dash of cynicism when provocation made it seasonable."

In 1778, Mason wrote to his cousin Colonel Mercer, referring again to the great loss he had sustained in 1773, and expressing a bit of his inner nature: "About four years ago I had the misfortune to lose my wife; to you who knew her and the happy manner in which we lived, I will not attempt to describe my feelings. I was scarce able to bear the first shock, a depression of my spirits and a settled melancholy followed, from which I never expect or desire to recover. I determined to spend the remainder of my days in privacy and retirement with my children, from whose society alone I could expect to comfort."

In March, 1779, Washington, however, sent him a profound rebuke for this attitude so often expressed. In his letter, he cries out: ". . . no

man who wishes well to the liberties of his country, and desires to see its rights established, can avoid crying out: Where are our men of abilities? Why do they not come forth to save their country? Let this voice, my dear sir, call upon you, Jefferson, and others. Do not, from a mistaken opinion, that we are about to sit down under our own vine and our own fig-tree—let our hitherto noble struggle end in ignominy. Believe me when I tell you there is danger of it.” And earlier in the same letter, he says: “I cannot refrain lamenting, however, in the most poignant terms, the fatal policy too prevalent in most of the States, in employing their ablest men at home in posts of honor or profit, till the great national interests are fixed upon a solid basis.”

In 1780, General Henry Lee offered a commission in his command to Mason’s son William, then a captain in the Continental Army, but Mason replied in the negative, saying: “. . . I would most cheerfully indulge him if I had any thought of continuing him in the military line, as in that case it would give me great satisfaction to place him under the direction of a gentleman who has rendered such important services to our country, and in whose friendship I could so thoroughly confide. But I have ever intended him for civil and private life; his lot must be that of a farmer and country gentleman, and at this time there is a

particular domestic circumstance which will require his return as soon as his present time of service expires.”

George Mason continued to pursue his scheme of living and to serve his country in such capacities as suited his temperament. He served in and out of the Virginia assembly, at various intervals, and at all times took a vigorous interest in public questions. His bills, and his suggestions met with great favor. His opinion was sought by nearly all of the leaders in the State assembly and among the members of the delegation to Congress.

His next great contest, however, was to come in the Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia in 1787, eleven years after the Virginia Convention where he won such signal success. In the meantime, he remarried and lived the quiet life he seemed so much to prefer; namely, that of a country gentleman.

We obtain a picture of him at the period just following Washington's return to Mount Vernon after having resigned his commission. It is from the pen of Miss Lewis of Fredericksburg, who was visiting at Mount Vernon. She writes: "Among the most notable callers was Mr. George Mason of Gunston Hall, who was on his way home from Alexandria, and who brought a charming granddaughter with him, about fourteen years old. He is said to be one of the greatest states-

men and wisest men in Virginia. We had heard much of him and were delighted to look in his face, hear him speak, and take his hand, which he offered in courtly manner. He is straight in figure but not tall, and has a grand head and clear grey eyes. He has few white hairs, though they say he is about sixty years old."

The prodding of his political associates and friends, together with his great interest in political philosophy gradually brought him to the point where he agreed to take part in the Constitutional Convention, although he was at first opposed to the idea of a federation and extremely jealous of any infringement upon the sovereignty of Virginia.

Frequent incidents, however, revealed to him the inefficiency of the governments then in existence, such as raids conducted along the shores of the Potomac by pirate crews, the failure of Maryland to join in opening the upper Potomac to navigation, and others.

Within ten days after his arrival at Philadelphia as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, we find him writing his son George: "I begin to grow heartily tired of the etiquette and nonsense so fashionable in this city. It would take me some months to make myself master of them, and that it should require months to learn what is not worth remembering as many minutes, is to me so

discouraging a circumstance as determines me to give myself no manner of trouble about them.”

We know, on the other hand, that certain of the delegates were more than caught as is usually the case with weaker men, by the whirl and twirl of the social set. Full many a legislator has been laid in the dust simply because he tried to fall in step and learn strange trifles. Mason, like the true Spartan that he was, proved himself a man in the above passage.

He was from the very first true to this instinct so characteristically his own. He was now coming to be an old man, doubtless “set” in his ways and like most men of decision and power, extremely impatient of the dallying and delays so necessary when men pursue “nonsense.” Throughout the whole of the Convention, he remained a free-lance following his own course, charting his own way.

We find him opposing the idea of a single Executive with all of his power because he thought it sure to result in a monarchy. He even accused the Convention of seeking to pave the way for a monarchy and warned them of such a dangerous design. He urged the necessity of placing the Executive power in three persons instead of one, in order to constitute each a check on the other, which plan we now know to be unwise and productive of no strength whatever. Viewed from

the standpoint of Mason's premise, however, his argument was profound and prophetic.

He stood for adequate balances and checks upon the three branches of the government and was much put out because the checks provided by the Constitution were not greater in number and more stringent. We find him in the thick of every debate, contesting for what he considered right with a stubbornness and an ingenuity that is amazing.

It is impossible, in this brief sketch to trace step by step, his course in those memorable summer months of 1787. But to those who do follow the drama of that great Convention and carefully note the portions of its work that Mason was responsible for, a great and lasting impression of the man's wisdom and foresight is bound to result. I believe I stand on safe ground when I say that the work of any other man in the Convention might be withdrawn without essentially impairing the integrity of the government we have today; but I am extremely doubtful whether we could remove the work and influence of Mason without seeing the whole structure come tumbling down about our ears. His was the genius for placing his thought to the essential things, the keystones that really supported a principle or thought.

We are, however, more concerned with the man. His works are valuable only to the extent

that they furnish indications of the real man. To know the man is our purpose, and if he rises out of this page in real flesh and blood, we will all be moved to discover more of his deeds. We find him writing again to his son George on June first, this statement concerning the sense of responsibility which he felt: "The eyes of the United States are turned upon this assembly, and their expectations raised to a very anxious degree.

"May God grant, we may be able to gratify them, by establishing a wise and just government. For my own part, I never before felt myself in such a situation; and declare I would not, upon pecuniary motives, serve in this convention for a thousand pounds a day. The revolt from Great Britain and the formation of our new governments at that time, were nothing compared to the great business before us now; there was then a certain degree of enthusiasm, which inspired and supported the mind; but to view, through the calm, sedate medium of reason the influence which the establishment now proposed may have upon the happiness or misery of millions yet unborn, is an object of such magnitude, as absorbs, and in a manner suspends the operations of the human understanding."

His opposition to the clause permitting the importation of slaves until the year 1808 was unrelenting in force, and when Morris seized upon

it as a means of bargain between the Northern and the Southern States, Mason refused to sign the Constitution and fought its adoption in the Virginia Convention with all his ability, saying that the compromises and bargains made had so altered the agreed plan that he couldn't support it.

Colonel Mason was no abolitionist, yet his argument against the slave traffic reads like that of a Lovejoy or a Garrison, and in keeping with many of his arguments was strangely prophetic. Note the incisive quality of the man's reasoning faculties when he says: "Slavery discourages arts and manufactures. The poor despise labor when it is performed by slaves. They prevent the migration of whites who really strengthen and enrich a country. They produce the most pernicious effect upon manners. Every master of slaves is born a petty tyrant. They bring the judgment of Heaven on a country. As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes and effects Providence punishes national sins by national calamities. . . . I hold it essential in every point of view that the general government should have the power to prevent the increase of slavery."

His championship of States-Rights, his desire to reserve the greatest power in the people, his fight for a Bill of Rights which was finally won as a price of ratification by Virginia, his contest

for an advisory council for the Executive—are only a few of the great influences he exerted in the closing days of the Convention. Suffice it to say that he was a powerful man, a man whose influence was feared and respected by Washington and other federalists. He waged a powerful fight and impressed his ideas upon the new form of government, whether he fought to victory or went down to defeat.

He died at Gunston Hall, October 7, 1792, in the sixty-seventh year of his life. He lived to see the new government launched under the guidance of his neighbor and life-long friend, George Washington. His last years were spent in quiet retirement under the comfortable roof he loved so much and in those domestic attachments he ever so highly prized. Tortured by gout, hurt by the loss of her whom he prized above life, reluctant to leave home and its grateful shelter, frankly hating the shams of society and the vanities of urban life—he, nevertheless, laid his mite in the coffers of the race. And what a tremendous contribution it was!



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

He has continued to intrigue us to this day, because he remained a Yankee to the last.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

The Yankee character will ever intrigue and mystify the world. It has a many-sidedness that challenges classification. It matters little from what angle we approach it; we may fancy that we have it under our hat, as small boys do when they set out to capture grasshoppers. You put your hat down and then you find that the prey has flown. We determine that the Yankee character is thus-and-so, and then perceive that it isn't at all. The emphasis lies in another direction.

Franklin was born a Yankee and his great success as a character that puzzled and intrigued the world as long as he lived is due to the fact that he remained a Yankee to the last. A certain dash of worldly liberalism mixed in with his Puritan mysticism gave a flavor to his character that has caused it to remain delightfully palatable all these years.

I like those stories of his boyhood in Boston Town. They are so distinctly Franklinian—so much a part and so much at odds with his environment—as to linger with us. And they are guideposts furnishing an admirable index to the man that was to be.

While swimming one day in the old mill pond, he took hold of his kite string and proved to his

playmates that a breeze strong enough to fly a kite would also draw him from one end of the pond to the other. His Yankee curiosity and native ingenuity thus early found expression. Later in life his kite was to bring him fame on two continents.

He very early displayed an independence of will and thought which admirably demonstrated a favorite epigram by Poor Richard to the effect that "it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright." Ever there is that determined tendency to "stand upright" and a certain feverish apprehension against being an "empty sack."

His thirst for all knowledge, his sublime faith in his own faculties of reason, very early brought him in conflict with the clergy and the prevailing religious tendencies. We find it cropping out that autumn day in his early youth when his father was putting down a hogshead of beef. The youth had noticed that the father habitually said grace over the beef at each meal. His practical mind, and his acute sense of humor, prompted him to suggest to the elder Franklin that the business be done at once by saying grace over the whole hogshead instead of piecemeal at a time! It requires little imagination to know how this suggestion was received by the stern-willed elder—he who had carried Benjamin in his own arms but four hours after his birth to the altar of Old South!

Apprenticed at a very early age to his brother James to learn the printing trade, his real career was launched and it unfolded with amazing rapidity. He did all the odd jobs so common around a print shop and newspaper office. He ran errands, delivered the papers, built the fire, swept the floor, learned to set type, made wood engravings, manned the press and, finally, his confidence doubtless aided and abetted by his youth, turned his hand to writing copy.

Now man or youth doesn't write unless he has impressions which clamor for expression; certainly few ever make the beginning for other motives. You read a book or a pamphlet and from thinking about it, a different viewpoint asserts itself. The fingers fairly itch for pen and paper and you try your hand at it.

Franklin, himself, tells us that at the age of fifteen "a few books" fell into his hands which contradicted certain points in religion as he had heard them expounded, "so that I began to doubt (the Revelation itself." If it seems curious to us today that a youth of fifteen summers should be reading works on theology and forming opinions of his own about the whole subject matter, we should keep in mind that few books, if any, were then extant on any subject save religion.

At any rate, his strong self-assertiveness would not suffer him to remain silent. And so he came

to write occasional pieces, which an uncanny knowledge of human nature told him must not be associated with himself if they were ever to be published. They were accordingly pushed under the office door in the stillness of night. The blustering and noisy James forthwith inserted them in his *New England Courant*, certain that they must be from the timid pen of some learned Ph. D.

Franklin's early writings were very clever digs at the prevailing theological tendencies, and appearing in a newspaper in Boston they fell like a clap of thunder from a clear sky. It is needless to suggest the hornet's nest they stirred up, the charges and the counter-charges, the fanning of the air with words they engendered until much heat resulted.

The youthful 'prentice, always surcharged with an over-abundance of mischievous humor, was naturally bursting with the ruckus he had caused. He redoubled his blows, emerged more and more from the vague and the indefinite, until in the inevitable over-confidence of youth, he left a vulnerable spot open and the waiting opposition closed in on the struggling *Courant* and sought to snuff it out at one pounce.

James Franklin was arrested, tried and convicted under the strict laws then obtaining for maintaining a "notorious, scandalous" newspaper and forbidden to publish it in the future. Frank-

lin, in the false pride of youth had already revealed to his brother the authorship of the articles which had caused the trouble. It is not difficult to imagine what the hard-fisted James thought of it, but he was betwixt the devil and the deep sea; but for the present emergency he might easily have crushed the upstart apprentice between his huge paws, brother though he was.

But James Franklin was in a pretty mess and the only way out was further to flatter the vanity of the youth. Accordingly, he determined to issue the *Courant* in the name of Benjamin in order to circumvent the order of the authorities. This meant that the apprentice must be publicly released from his indenture. A private indenture was drawn up to continue to bind the master and apprentice.

Having had a taste of power, the sixteen-year-old youth, now suddenly arriving at man's estate in the eye of the law, took all the rope his new position allowed. He assumed to assert the position the letter of the law assigned him and this brought him into open and continual conflict with the head-strong James. Franklin later admitted that he was more to blame than his brother for their unpleasant relations; that he was bull-headed, saucy, loud and vainglorious and assumed an authority far beyond his years. He was, however, fortified to one important extent; when he reasoned that his brother would not dare to reveal

their unlawful agreement concerning the indenture, he reasoned wisely.

Finding that his brother had talked to other printers in Boston so that they refused him work, he ran away to New York, and eventually landed in Philadelphia. There is a purpose in citing in detail this early experience of Franklin and that is to point out the marked effect it had in shaping his whole career, more particularly his fundamental character.

His experience with the authorities in Boston proved a valuable lesson, one that he never forgot; his argumentative and controversial style of writing had accomplished little but to get him into trouble; his pride and lack of tact had driven him far from his friends and associates. He determined to adopt a different attitude, and he did profit immeasurably from his early mistakes.

He continued to be a free-thinker and an opponent of the orthodox theology to the end of his days. His location in free-thinking Philadelphia was especially fortunate because it enabled him to pursue his own inclinations with greater freedom. He adopted, however, the cautious plan of subscribing financially to the support of all creeds and sects, but seldom attended public worship personally. His Sundays were personally sacred to him for reading and study along more congenial lines, and doubtless they furnished him that knowledge

and information which pushed him to the very forefront.

His whole experience with religious differences of opinion led him to sum up the matter in a characteristic way: "Many have quarrel'd about Religion, that never practiced it." And then he adds: "Indeed, when religious people quarrel about religion, or hungry people about their victuals, it is as if they had not much of either among them."

The passion he acquired soon after his arrival at Philadelphia for not antagonizing the opposition caused him to stifle and subdue the uncompromising attitude one would expect to find in a Puritan descendant. Later when he came to hold public office, he was required to meet a religious test and to swear on his oath to a belief in religious tenets which we know he did not hold.

He did this glibly enough on many occasions for religion was not vital to him in the final analysis; indeed, there is a curious suggestion that his temperament was such that his beliefs might readily be compromised to gain the end sought. Franklin was no fanatic; nor did his itch for fame permit him to gain it at the expense of martyrdom. He was too practical, too much the politician for that. Indeed, his whole life is a curious collection of paradoxes, of compromises, of giving way—

but of a persistent and often fruitless search for real knowledge and virtue.

His efforts to establish himself in life, his various ventures with others, the three times that he was thrown out of employment and upon his own resources, and the contact these experiences gave him with various types of humanity, need not be reviewed in detail. They served to acquaint him with human nature, to curb his natural hot-headedness, to acquaint him with the ease with which glib promises may be broken and to sharpen generally his own wits and perception.

At last, after a number of experiences and nearly two years in England on a wild goose chase, he set up a printing establishment of his own in Philadelphia with one Meredith, whose father had advanced the necessary hundred pounds for type and equipment. It was a hard struggle from the beginning, competition was rife and soon the two partners perceived that there was not enough in the business to support two. And Franklin, having the greater faith and no cushion like a wealthy father to fall back upon, stayed with the sinking ship, obligated himself to buy Meredith's share and at last found himself in possession of a shop of which he was, indeed, master.

From that point on his business career developed without break. His industry was boundless;

he was at work when his neighbors went to bed at night and again at work when they arose in the morning. He strove to improve the excellence of printing which then was loosely done, and soon won much public business because of the greater accuracy of his proofs.

He tells how they won the first public printing, shortly after he and Meredith opened their shop. Andrew Bradford was public printer and he printed the usual speech of the governor at the opening of the assembly, "in a coarse, blundering manner; we reprinted it elegantly and correctly and sent one to every member. They were sensible of the difference; it strengthened the hands of our friends in the House, and they voted us their printers for the year ensuing."

He soon was flirting with the idea of launching a newspaper, for in the same year that his partnership commenced with Meredith he confided to a friend the idea. This friend immediately told his old employer Keimer who, to be first on the public, launched *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. Franklin sat by, doubtless with thoughts of his own in telling secrets prematurely, and watched Keimer gradually lose ground. Eventually, he purchased the *Gazette* for a small sum.

The *Gazette* immediately became a semi-weekly, the first in America. The young publisher also became editor and chief writer and his real

development may safely be said to have been commenced. We find a marked improvement in his style, and an introduction of that humor which was to make his paper a success and his name famous throughout the Colonies. There is less and less of the old direct argumentative style and more and more of the subtle and the inferred meaning.

For instance, he observed that a competitor was reprinting foreign news items which had appeared in his columns some five years previously, as having just occurred. Franklin wanted this called to the attention of the public. Observe how he set about the task, and what a vast improvement in his knowledge of human nature it reveals!

He published a letter in his columns, presumably from a subscriber signing himself as "Memory" in which he sets out the facts, specifically referring to the folio numbers in which the offending items appeared. Franklin prints the letter and adds an "editor's note" in which he observes that upon examination he did not find the items mentioned in his last two numbers. The folio numbers, being greater than any he had published, had caused him to examine the corresponding issues of his rival and there he had found the items, so he accordingly inferred that the subscriber had made a mistake and really intended to address the letter of complaint to his rival!

His facility with the pen and his ability to write

in almost any style and thereby cover his tracks, caused him to perpetuate many hoaxes upon the reading public, but it may be said in extenuation that they were all used for a purpose. In 1760 when the colonists were worried for fear the English would terminate the war with France before the right to retain Canada had been made secure, he pretended to discover an old Spanish book in which he found a chapter on "The Means of Disposing the Enemy to Peace," which so effectively argued the case that the war was continued.

In 1773 when Parliament was asserting the right to tax the colonists on the ground that had they remained in England they would be under the authority of that body and that migration had not changed their status, he pretended to discover a proclamation issued by Frederic the Great asserting the right to tax the people of the British Isles under the same theory. It instantly created a great furor, and Franklin, then in England, writes to a friend: "I am not suspected as the author except by one or two friends; and we have heard the latter spoken of in the highest terms, as the keenest and severest piece that has appeared here for a long time. Lord Mansfield, I hear, said of it, that it was very *able* and *artful* indeed; and would do mischief by giving here a bad impression of the measures of government, and in the

colonies by encouraging them in their contumacy. . . . What made it the more noticed here was that people in reading it were, as the phrase is, taken in, till they had got half through it. . . .”

His pretended letter of a German prince to a Hessian officer in America, designed to increase the odium they were under, certainly accomplished that purpose, and when in a company in London where it was asserted that the fable writers had anticipated every subject and no more could be produced, Franklin called for pen and paper and produced one on an eagle and a cat that carried a powerful moral on the then existing situation between Britain and America. He once personally printed an imitation newspaper in France to get across a bit of propaganda, purporting to carry a letter by John Paul Jones defending himself against the charge of being a pirate, which also was uncomfortable reading for the British ministry.

He even produced a fictitious chapter of the Bible which he called “Genesis LI” and memorized it so well that he would “read it by heart out of my Bible, and obtain the remarks of the Scripturarians upon it, which were sometimes very diverting.” This chapter was a parable against persecution and so cleverly done as to deceive many authorities.

In spite of his readiness with the pen, he appar-

ently shrank from employing it in the public business. In an age when famous documents were drawn up and where Franklin was ever present, not one came from his pen. Indeed, Jefferson tells us that when the Declaration was under consideration some phrases in it gave offense to certain members of Congress and were stricken out. One day he happened to be seated near Franklin and the latter said: "I have made it a rule whenever in my power, to avoid becoming the draughtsman of papers to be reviewed by a public body. I took my lesson from an incident which I will relate to you." And then he told the story of the hatter about to open a shop of his own. Proposing a sign to his friends to read: "John Thompson, Hatter, makes and sells hats for ready money," saw it reduced simply to "John Thompson" with a picture of a hat on it after his friends got through with it.

While he often got a bit of fun out of his own writings, he did not take kindly to the criticism and changes made by others. He once complained that a London editor "has drawn the teeth and pared the nails of my paper, so that it can neither scratch nor bite. It seems only to paw and mumble."

His "Poor Richard's Almanack" was his greatest success both from the standpoint of writer and publisher. The quaint sayings published therein,

the unusual humor and sound sense turned in a way to linger in the mind, brought him universal fame. Again we see his keen insight into human nature when he masks his own individuality behind that of the fictitious Poor Richard. The publishing of the Almanack brought him riches in time and was the most profitable venture he ever undertook. It enabled him to retire at the age of forty-two with an estate of seventy-five thousand dollars, free to pursue his studies and to dabble in his scientific experiments.

Almost from the start Franklin's penchant for fun crops out in the Almanack, but he used it for a purpose. Titan Leeds was issuing a very popular alamanac and Franklin was practical enough to know that unless he could win some of Leeds' following he could not hope for success. He couldn't afford to buy out Leeds so he determined to have Leeds die and thereby get him out of the way. So in his Almanack of 1733, he gravely predicts that his old friend Leeds will die on October 17, and to carry out the implication of friendship adds: "By his own calculation he will survive until the 26th of the same month. This small difference between us we have disputed whenever we have met these nine years past; but at length he is inclined to agree with my judgment. Which of us is most exact, a little time will now determine."

The next year he proceeded to poke fun at

Titan Leeds again, regretting that domestic affairs prevented him from being present at the bedside and personally closing the eyes of his old friend. He reaffirms that the stars foretold the death with their usual exactitude, but points out that sometimes Providence interferes. However, he inclines to the belief that Leeds is dead, "for there appears in his name, as I am assured, an Almanack for the year 1734 in which I am treated in a very gross and unhandsome manner; in which I am called a false predictor, an ignorant, a conceited scribbler, a fool, and a liar." He adds that his good friend would never have treated him this way.

The next year, he poked fun at the ghost of Titan Leeds and reports the progress Poor Richard and "Mistress Saunders" are making in their affairs; in the issue of 1740, he has Titan Leeds write him a letter from the other world. Finally, that serious-minded competitor gave up the business in disgust, refusing longer to be the butt of Franklin's jokes.

Each issue was a continual round of jokes; he gave a humorous twist even to his commonplace advice. For instance, "Let thy maidservant be faithful, strong and homely." "Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards." "This year the Stone-blind shall see but very little; the Deaf shall hear but poorly; and the Dumb

shan't speak very plain. And it's much, if my Dame Bridget talks at all this year. Whole Flocks, Herds and Drovers of Sheep, Swine and Oxen, Cocks and Hens, Ducks and Drakes, Geese and Ganders shall go to Pot; but the Mortality will not be altogether so great among Cats, Dogs and Horses. . . .”

His fun-making often appears low and coarse judged by modern standards, and sometimes decidedly off color, but we must keep in mind that it was in many respects a low and coarse age. An instance may be cited in his famous “Speech of Polly Baker” which originally appeared in the *Gazette* and was reprinted again and again for over half a century by American newspapers:

“The Speech of Miss Polly Baker before a Court of Judicatory, in New England, where she was prosecuted for a fifth time, for having a Bastard Child; which influenced the court to dispense with her punishment, and which induced one of her judges to marry her the next day—by whom she had fifteen children.

“May it please the honorable bench to indulge me in a few words: I am a poor, unhappy woman, who have no money to fee lawyers to plead for me, being hard put to it to get a living. . . . Abstracted from the law, I cannot conceive (may it please your honours) what the nature of my offence is. I have brought five children into the world, at the risque of my life; I have maintained them well by my own industry, without burthening

the township, and would have done it better, if it had not been for the heavy charges and fines I have paid. Can it be a crime (in the nature of things, I mean) to add to the King's subjects, in a new country that really needs people? I own it, I should think it a praiseworthy rather than a punishable action. I have debauched no other woman's husband, nor enticed any youth; these things I never was charged with; nor has anyone the least cause of complain with me, unless, perhaps the ministers of justice, because I have had children without being married, by which they have missed a wedding fee. But can this be a fault of mine? I appeal to your honours. You are pleased to allow I don't want sense; but I must be stupefied to the last degree, not to prefer the honourable state of wedlock to the condition I have lived in. I always was, and still am willing to enter into it; and doubt not my behaving well in it; having all the industry, frugality, fertility, and skill in economy appertaining to a good wife's character. I defy anyone to say I ever refused an offer of that sort; on the contrary, I readily consented to the only proposal of marriage that ever was made me, which was when I was a virgin, but too easily confiding in the person's sincerity that made it, I unhappily lost my honour by trusting to his; for he got me with child, and then forsook me.

"That very person, you all know; he is now become a magistrate of this country; and I had hopes he would this day have appeared on the bench, and have endeavored to moderate the Court in my favour; then I should have scorned to have mentioned it, but I must now complain of it as

unjust and unequal, that my betrayer, and undoer, the first cause of all my faults and miscarriages (if they must be deemed such), should be advanced to honour and power in the government that punishes my misfortunes with stripes and infamy. . . . But how can it be believed that Heaven is angry at my having children, when to the little done by me towards it, God has been pleased to add his divine skill and admirable workmanship in the formation of their bodies, and crowned the whole by furnishing them with rational and immortal souls? Forgive me, gentlemen, if I talk a little extravagantly on these matters: I am no divine, but if you, gentlemen, must be making laws, do not turn natural and useful actions into crimes by your prohibitions. But take into your wise consideration the great and growing number of bachelors in the country, many of whom, from the mean fear of the expense of a family, have never sincerely and honestly courted a woman in their lives; and by their manner of living leave unproduced (which is little better than murder) hundreds of their posterity to the thousandth generation. Is not this a greater offence against the public good than mine? Compel them, then, by law, either to marriage, or to pay double the fine of fornication every year. What must poor young women do, whom customs and nature forbid to solicit the men, and who cannot force themselves upon husbands, when the laws take no care to provide them any, and yet severely punish them if they do their duty without any; the duty of the first and great command of nature and nature's God, increase and multiply; a duty

from the steady performance of which nothing has been able to deter me, but for its sake I have hazarded the loss of the public esteem, and have frequently endured public disgrace and punishment; and therefore ought, in my humble opinion, instead of a whipping, to have a statue erected to my memory."

His own short-comings doubtless turned his thoughts in the direction of sympathetic understanding, and we find him devoting his pen again and again to the cause of toleration. Seldom, if ever, however, did he pretend to defend moral transgressions, and his letters are full of advice to marry young. Often does he exhibit his delight in hearing the news of the marriage of friends or relatives.

Franklin seems to have been a man utterly devoid of the finer sentiments attaching itself usually to marriage. I doubt whether he ever knew the real meaning of "love" in its higher and finer sense. This is perhaps natural in one so worldly-wise and, if we be not misunderstood in using the term, so self-centered and so much the egotist. Perhaps it was due largely to his own vital physique; to his enlarged earthly-mindedness and crass coarseness in his processes of thought on sex. It may be due to an improper beginning in his very early youth when, as he tells us, "That hard to be governed passion of youth had hurried

me frequently into intrigues with low women that fell in my way, which were attended with some expense and great inconvenience, besides a continual risk to my health by a distemper, which of all things I dreaded, though by great good luck I escaped it." This passage is not only valuable for the admission it contains, but for the revelation it gives of his fundamental attitude of mind. We find the interest in self predominating; "expense," "great inconvenience," "risk to my health," "I escaped it." There seems to be little thought of the inconveniences or risks his own acts or example might have brought to the lives of others.

His attitude when he came to seek a wife, so frankly told as to cause one of finer sensibilities almost to shrink from his page, reveals one so dwarfed to the higher and nobler strains of love-making as to arouse actual pity for him that he was so undeveloped in this direction, at the expense of the material and crass. Yet he was morally earnest and desired virtue above all things, but we cannot escape the conclusion that here again he was the egotist seeking approbation from the world, more than he was the sincere penitent.

He had at least two illegitimate children. His illegitimate son, William Franklin, became royal governor of New Jersey largely through Franklin's influence in securing the appointment. He, in

turn, was the father of at least one illegitimate child, William Temple Franklin, who served as secretary to his grandfather when the latter was minister to France. His illegitimate daughter was the wife of John Foxcroft of Philadelphia. Little else is known of her. He had two children by his wife Deborah Franklin; Francis Franklin who died at four years of smallpox, and Sarah, who became the wife of Richard Bache. It is, in fact, extremely doubtful whether Franklin was ever legally married to Deborah, for he infers as will be noted later, that it was a common law marriage due to reasons he sets out.

We do know there is a complete absence of the sentiment we commonly expect to find between Franklin and Deborah. Nowhere do we find him writing a "love letter" to her, for instance, although he spent upwards of twenty years away from her in Europe. There is ever exhibited a spirit of appreciation for the material comforts she had provided for him and for the material assistance through her industry, frugality and skill in management, but never once does he even scribble to her those sweet nothings which, while often meaningless to others, do exhibit that something higher and better than mere material satisfaction existed between them.

Franklin tried to discipline himself with a self-made moral code and attained some success in

winning most of the virtues he deemed necessary for a life of influence and fame. But after two years of struggle against this "hard to be governed passion of youth," in which he apparently made little headway, he resolved to save himself further pains by "taking a wife." He speaks of the matter as he might speak of going into the market for a new broom or a new font of type!

Mrs. Godfrey who was living with her husband in his shop evidently encouraged him in this determination, having in mind a young girl relative as a proper mate for him. Franklin says: "The old folks encouraged me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey managed our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing house, which I believe was then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word that they then had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been informed the printing business was not a profitable one; the types would soon be worn out, and more wanted; that S. Keimer and D. Harry had failed one after the other, and I should prob-

ably soon follow them; and, therefore, I was forbidden the house and the daughter shut up."

Franklin considered that this was a mere ruse to force his hand without the payment of the sum demanded, thinking the two young people had become too fond of each other to permanently separate. He resented this, quarrelled with Mrs. Godfrey and forced her to leave his house with her family. He then shows his utter inability to govern his passions and his greater determination to have a wife. He admits that he made advances in other directions and was denied. Then he turned his thoughts to Miss Read, whom he had had an understanding with before he left for England some years before, and whom he admits he had shamefully treated.

Miss Read—Deborah—had in the meantime married a worthless potter named Rogers, who had deserted her and she was now living with her mother. Franklin soon patched up a truce. Nothing had been heard of Rogers, and it was not known whether he was dead. He had left numerous debts behind and Franklin's practical mind warned him against the double danger of bigamy, if Rogers should ever turn up in the event of a legal marriage, and also his fear that in legally marrying Deborah he should be liable for Rogers' debts. After he dwells on these considerations, he adds: "We ventured, however, over all these dif-

faculties, and I took her to wife September 1, 1730." The inference is that it was a common law marriage. Shortly thereafter he brought home his illegitimate son, William, and while Franklin testifies that Deborah reared him in love there is good evidence to show that she violently hated him and that he was a continual cause of dispute and trouble. It is apparent, then, that William was not the son of Deborah, as some have insisted. We do not know. One biographer has insinuated that he was the son of Mrs. Godfrey's relative, but we think this to be a far-fetched effort to besmirch the good name of this young woman.

Deborah was a very illiterate woman, scarcely able to write and she called Franklin "Pappy" which his enemies used to ridicule him for long years. The development of her husband in culture, knowledge and refinement is pitiful to witness from her own standpoint. She did not grow in stature with him, but seems to have stood still. Then, again, he was away from her long years on end, moving in fine society, meeting the learned men in politics, science and literature and constantly moving in their society as an equal, if not a superior. And, betimes, he did not hesitate to flirt with other ladies who crossed his path and carry on intrigues and affairs with them!

While there is much to condemn in his looseness

in this particular, and in his indiscretion in reducing much of it to writing, because of the example it might afford others, we must acknowledge that in this particular, he was frank and honest and willing for the world to know him as he really was. His letter to a young man "On the Choice of a Mistress," is an example of this and reveals a wide knowledge of the wrong type of women. His joke about the printer who, in setting up the Bible omitted "not" from the commandment so that it read, "Thou shalt commit adultery," and then his observation that the faulty copy was evidently still in the hands of gentlemen who had not yet discovered the error, tends to convict him of no serious attempt to mend his ways in this particular. He was philosopher enough to know that "As a man thinketh, so is he," but he apparently *enjoyed* the gratification of this side of his nature.

In spite of his peculiar family relations, and his odd notion of morals, we cannot overlook his effort all through his life to win those qualities of virtue all sane and ambitious men desire. He did succeed by long application in overcoming many of his youthful faults, and he demonstrated that his method would carry a man far in this world.

He was in a position to render some very distinctive services to his country, and he did render one great and lasting service; namely, in his ministry to France, where his tact, his humor, his

philosophy and wit did more than anything else to bring that country to the side of the Colonies. He was popular alike with all classes and parties and this one service contributed much to the final winning of the Revolution. But the service he rendered in other instances where he had a great opportunity, is somewhat curious and somewhat disappointing. Not in what he actually did, but what he might have done, his great reputation and ability duly considered, is the point where we begin to wonder.

He signed the Declaration of Independence but refused to take a more active part in it other than to sit in the committee that drafted it. He might easily have been the draughtsman; he likewise served in the Constitutional Convention and we know that one of the considerations which moved George Mason to attend that Convention as a delegate was the fact that Dr. Franklin was to be there. But Madison has left a pitiful picture of him there, sleeping soundly in his chair during the debates, and being unable to speak when he desired, but getting his friend James Wilson to read his remarks for him. Whether Franklin actually found his gout interfering with his forensics, or whether this was a part of his craft to get his full remarks before posterity, we do not know.

His service in the French and Indian War was very great and he did more than anyone else to

make Braddock's expedition possible; but his service at the Albany assembly is again disappointing. He proposed a close union of the colonies and then did not see it through to completion. His service in England during the Stamp Act trouble was shrewd and tactful, but he was not nearly so successful in getting the cause of the Colonies squarely before the world as he was in enhancing Dr. Franklin's reputation; it was left to Paine, Henry, Jefferson, Mason and others to perform this larger service.

In the field of science, he made many discoveries and suggestions, but only two seem to have gained any great usefulness; namely, the lightning rod and his improved stove, known as the "Franklin fireplace." He did invent many other devices not commonly associated with his name. For instance, Washington records in his diary that he visited Franklin's home to see an "ironing machine" which "he called a mangle," and which Washington described as being particularly useful in ironing sheets and other large pieces of cloth not having seams. A recital of his experiments would fill a volume; he was ever curious, ever on the alert. He occupied his ocean voyages in experimenting with sailing devices, taking the temperature of the water and is credited with the discovery of the temperature of the Gulf Stream. He also experimented with the effect of oil on

rough water and for a long time carried a hollow cane in which was oil for the purpose of experimenting with every pond he passed.

His experiment with the kite where he discovered that lightning is a collected charge of electricity is well known; he also conducted many experiments with batteries and electricity. Once in getting ready to kill a turkey with it, he inadvertently placed his hand on a battery post and was knocked unconscious. He observed: "I was about to kill a turkey and came near killing a goose!"

Franklin also improved printing presses, methods of casting types, engravings, paper-making and designed the first Revolutionary flag. He invented spectacles for himself, and his house in Philadelphia was full of curious devices and inventions to lighten his work and bring more comfort into his life. One device enabled him to lock and unlock his chamber door from his bed.

Throughout his whole life he experimented with the human body and entertained many theories concerning health and disease which he was forever testing. In spite of his powerful frame, he suffered much in his later years from the gout, and a painful skin disease which covered his whole body with the exception of his face and hands. He experimented with his gout, but it seems never to have occurred to him to remove the cause as the

true remedy, rather than apply mere local palliatives.

He is entitled for a great deal of credit for his investigations in science, for his example stimulated others to enter this field. His own contributions, for the main part, were not of lasting importance. He gave his inventions to the world at large, refusing to patent them or to profit from them.

Franklin's reputation in other lines, however, was not fairly earned, if we are ever to judge the remarks or writings of an inconsistent man, and genius is ever inconsistent. He is perhaps better known as a philosopher than as anything else, save printer. Yet when the prospect of visiting Italy was before him, he said, "If I can find some new formula for the making of a Parmian cheese, I shall be happier than to examine all the inscriptions on all the monuments ever erected!" In spite of his early espousal of plain diet he seems never to have followed it as rigorously as he would have us believe.

We know that in spite of his vegetarian proclivities, he abandoned it in middle life, after the necessity of economy in his personal affairs was no longer pressing. He seems to stand revealed before us a man of huge appetites which he was not strong enough to resist, and which were gratified. In the physical scale they caused him pain

and some "expense and inconvenience"; but on the mental side they brought him to a profound knowledge in several directions, and a fame which cannot be denied. He is, for all his appetite, a huge and active figure, a man of the world, the first all-around man America produced. He never pretended to be any other.

He died in the eighty-fourth year of his age in Philadelphia of pneumonia superinduced by one of his theories. He sat naked before his open window in a draft each day, and arising in his illness to do this, caught cold and died from it. And so was closed his last experiment!

COMPARISON OF GEORGE MASON AND BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

History has judged men for what they did, and for what influence they had on their times and on posterity. Perhaps it is just as well to take the deed, and let the character of the man hover ever in the background, unless it be so interwoven with his deeds as to be inseparable. I prefer, if possible, to reconstruct the man for what he was, and then we know what he would do—what deeds whether large or small to expect from him.

The first great contrast I see in the figures of Mason and Franklin is that of how they faced the world as men. Franklin was the man of the world, worldly-wise and taught in that dear school of Experience. He proved that his man is a social animal, inter-dependent upon his fellows; we have the suspicion that Franklin could never have been happy except in the crowds, in the cities, in the social concourse. He took them all, high and low, male and female, scholar and illiterate, prince and pauper. He struggled more for their approbation, to be a big man among them, than for anything else. His every action seems to indicate that he belongs to that class that puts up a mighty front, that would rather *seem* to be, than really *be*, great.

Mason, on the other hand, could very well get along without this confusion and hubbub of the market place and the centers of population. He did not need the crowd to sustain him or to occupy his mind or talents. Rather than glorying in the city, he detested it and loathed it with all his being. Crowds did not stimulate him; they irked him, jarred him, aroused his antagonism. His friends were carefully selected and were, for the most part, men of his own station in life and of the same interest and temperament. Mason was not a graduate of the "dear school" Dr. Franklin loved to talk about; his life had been a sheltered one in comparison, but he was, none-the-less, a clear-thinker and keen analyst because of his great intellect and his ability to use it.

The second great contrast between these two men is their attitude toward the opposite sex. Franklin has condemned himself out of his own mouth; the pity of it is that, when we read him and his matter-of-fact recital of his effort to find a helpmate, we are struck with the thought of how heavily he paid for that "experience." His intrigues had seared his soul to such an extent that it had become hardened to all the finer sensibilities long before he made his amends to Deborah Read and "took her to wife." As the printers have it, he was case-hardened, stripped of the higher tune.

Mason is the exact opposite, a strong man

whose nature rang true to the highest and noblest emotions which man hath. We know that Anne Mason was more than a mere fend to him in a search for abstract virtue; she was his very life and being. He continued to treasure her memory long after she had been laid to rest and her influence was ever with him. Because he had the finer tune he saw more in her, perhaps, than she really was—and so he came to worship her.

Franklin acknowledged no debt due to Deborah save the physical help she had given him; he described her as like a squat china pitcher! She had no influence over him, save to encourage him to spend close to twenty years away from her! We do not read that her death caused any "melancholy" to settle down over him; and we know that their interests converged only at one point, and that was in the family circle. And what a contrast the two families are!

The third great contrast is found in what they left behind them. Both estates have been scattered and blown to the winds. Franklin has left a reputation of having been a many-sided man, of having contributed a great deal to our national character. Indeed, he did contribute much to our national character but, for the most part, his contributions were those of the dabbler and the jack-of-all-trades. His activities tended more to enrich the fame of the man; their substance often

fades when examined too closely for any lasting impression upon the times.

He has a reputation for being a great practical philosopher, yet he was not the author of an original philosophy; he was a borrower, an adapter and arranger of the ideas of others. Mason, on the other hand, has no reputation to speak of along this line, yet when we roll back the curtain, he looms up like a giant before us; his achievements in the direction of original thought in political philosophy must ever amaze us. Franklin left little behind him save old principles cleverly turned; Mason left a concept of governmental organization which must always be beneficial to posterity, if honestly followed.

Both were human, and therefore often took hold of the small end of the horn. Witness their mistakes in the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Franklin insisted, practically alone, that the Executive should serve without salary. Hamilton seconded his resolution, out of respect to Franklin, to get it before the Convention! Mason, and he was joined by Franklin, insisted that the Executive authority should be divided between three men! Luckily, both ideas were voted down—but they reveal that even profound thinkers may find themselves in the canebrakes at times.

Franklin had the superior advantage, being much traveled, in spite of his lesser wealth. He

made several trips to Europe and traveled extensively in the Colonies. There is no record that George Mason was ever south of Richmond or north of Philadelphia; most of his travel was in Virginia alone. Yet in culture and learning, he was the equal of Franklin.

Franklin's personality was doubtless the more charming of the two. He had that grace and ease which comes with long contact with people. His wit and sense of humor, his policy of never contradicting anyone or in openly expressing an opinion, made him the friend of all. He had a rare ability to adapt himself to any situation, almost to speak any vernacular. Mason's personality was far from repelling, but he doubtless had much of the aloofness of the Virginia fox-hunting aristocracy. He mingled little with mankind, except in his own social sphere, and, even then, not quite on terms of absolute equality. Like Washington, there was an air of superiority about him, not feigned, but natural because he was a born leader. His humor was of the sarcastic type, which only the "born rich" can afford to assert and indulge. A man of the world like Franklin, who must depend upon those about him for his business and daily bread, can never afford to assert it. The Franklins learn to compromise their ideals with a smile on their lips, to drive bargains and to seek more than they really want in order to gain their

point; the Masons, being absolutely independent of any necessity, do not compromise but resist with a genuine horror, and not only detest the Gouvernor Morris they encounter, but abandon their whole ideal in order to resist the trifles the politician contends for.

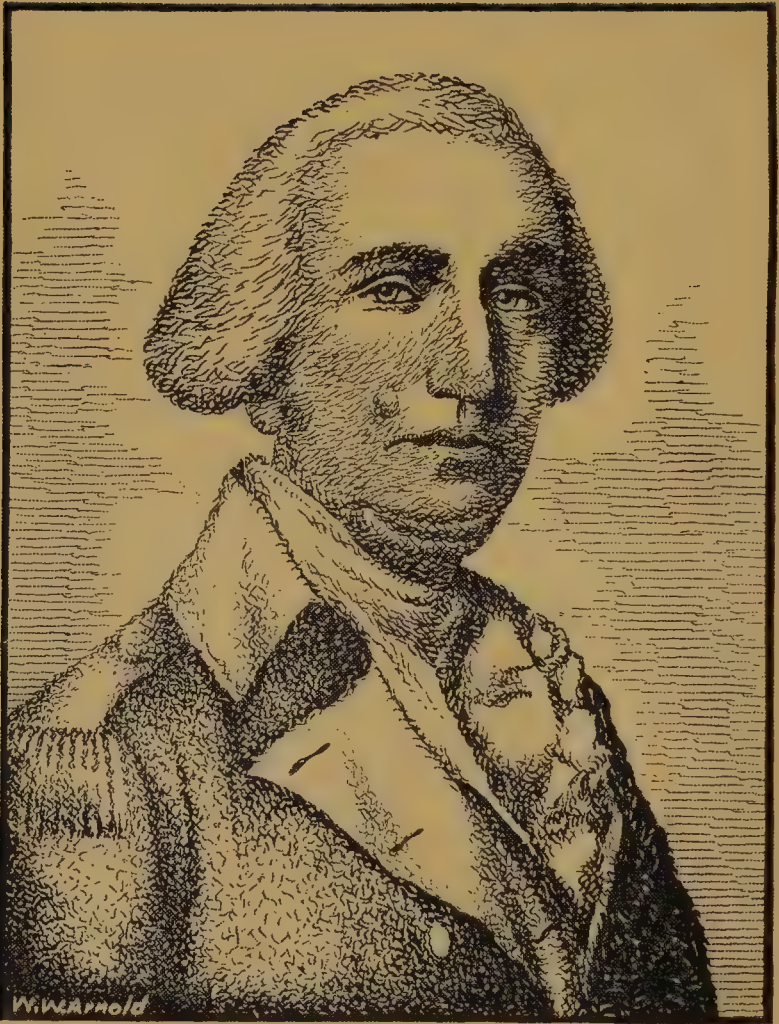
The Franklins generally gain the greater reputation because they know the inconsistencies of the world and cater to them; the Masons usually fail to win their just deserts. But the estimate that the masses place upon the cleverer of the two types is not necessarily the correct estimate. Character looms behind it all, and when character is revealed, the true choice is already made for us.

CHAPTER II

Great Soldiers

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ANDREW JACKSON



GEORGE WASHINGTON

He was a strong and passionate man who won in the end, because he learned to subdue himself.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

I AM sure that we do not begin to appreciate Washington until we discover that he was a human being. That interpolator, Weems, in his anxiety to serve an appetizing dish, really over-reached his hand and almost made a mess of it.

There comes a day when we discover that the man had a temper, a temper so violent that it was not good for him; we learn that he could swear a round volley of quite sizable oaths when unduly provoked; we read, in his own diary, that he was not above an occasional mild lie when circumstances seemed to justify it; we find that he spent several years sighing for "his lowland beauty," writing love letters to her and dreaming of her during the long watches of the night by the camp-fire. Then, he just as promptly forgets her, when he meets Mary Philipse, loses his head, proposes and is let down in two days' time. We read, in a contemporary letter, that "General Washington danced for three hours and a half with General Greene's wife, without sitting down in a chair to rest."

Then we smile a bit, interest quickens, we shift to a more comfortable position in the chair and this man Washington begins to emerge from the

fog. We begin to see him, to appreciate him, to know him. And the more we know him the better we like him, the greater is our admiration for him.

He was a red-headed boy, big and strong, and possessed of all the fiery ardor and enthusiasm so commonly associated with such boys. He had an almost unnatural love of excitement and was blessed with a good assortment of strong and violent passions. At fifteen, the warlike spirit was so strong within him that his friends procured an appointment as midshipman for him in the British navy. But the tears of his mother were too much for him and caused him to surrender, as he thought, his ambition. And so, on a tear, hung the fate of unborn millions!

His unusual energy gave him a great love for athletic sports of all kinds. He is pictured to us as the biggest and strongest boy in the neighborhood, and the fact that he was the natural leader of his mates is unquestioned. Military sports seem to have been his chief diversion, but they do not necessarily indicate that a warlike passion had yet asserted itself. Many a boy plays at warfare who later fails to show any particular aptitude for it. It does indicate, however, a boundless energy that had to be worked off, and what is more natural than to turn to the chief diversion of one's elders?

At sixteen, we find him a man grown in stature and physical development. Tall, majestic, powerful, wonderfully formed and possessed of a head and carriage which denotes strength in every attitude. He went into the wilderness as surveyor for Lord Fairfax, too restless and ambitious for further schooling; too proud not to make his own way in the world.

From that moment on through all his formative years, and down almost to the day of his death, his life is crowded with action and he is continually in the midst of great and stirring events. He spent three years as a surveyor, first to Lord Fairfax and later in public service, almost entirely in the wilderness and in the open air.

The trials and privations of the trail-blazer were his in those years. He plodded through the forest, across streams, over mountain tops; he slept under the open sky, ate the rough fare of the frontier camp, worked with his plumb and chain and marked the way for future generations.

This training—constant, ardent, relentless—was the greatest possible schooling for the boy who was soon to carve his name large in the annals of history. He built a body that could withstand any hardship; he developed a philosophy, due to his daily contact with the elements of nature, which subdued that violent temper and gave him a calmness and poise in the face of ad-

versity that doubtless could not have been obtained in any other way. The best place in the world in which to get serenity and poise, to gain the upper hand over a turbulent nature, is in the woods. Here men—and boys!—have an opportunity to get their thinking done, and to settle grievous questions which all must settle.

We find him writing rules for conduct, acquiring a certain gravity of manner, refraining from speech unless there is something worth saying—all earmarks of your woodsman. When in the woods and largely alone, one communes more with Self, and the strong man, given sufficient time, always comes out of the woods with himself more thoroughly in hand.

None of the ease of the plantations and settlements for this youth! None of the soft cushions of luxury for him! So far as we know all the wealth he possessed was in his camp trunk and in that great, powerful body of his. While his father had died possessed of some land which had passed to his brother Lawrence, and his mother had a modest farm at Fredericksburg, there is no justification for the assumption that Washington was born to luxury.

Land meant little in those days. It was about the cheapest thing in the Old Dominion. The young surveyor could have taken up thousands of acres of it in his own name, no doubt. It was not

until one had money enough to secure labor to work the land, to clear it, put it under cultivation and get a crop to market, that land assumed any value. And slaves cost money.

But his three years in the wilderness as a surveyor were not in vain. He did his work well, there is no record that he complained or talked back to his superiors. He seems to have been one public servant who got the work done quickly, efficiently and thoroughly. No danger, no difficulty ever prevented this.

When Governor Dinwiddie wanted someone to carry a message to the French commandant on the Ohio river, Washington was selected. Then a youth of twenty-one, he did not hesitate even though it was late October. The constant wonder must be that in all the Colony the governor could not find, apparently, a man of more mature years to entrust with this important mission.

With only seven in his party including Christopher Gist, the guide, he set out. Seven hundred and fifty miles of wilderness and almost untrodden forest lay before him. But he pushed on rapidly, reaching the headwaters of the Potomac, thence across the mountains to the headwaters of the Youghiogheny and down that stream to the present location of Pittsburg. The young soldier immediately noted the great importance of this spot, standing as it did at the juncture of the two great

tributaries of the Ohio, and marked it for a fort.

The story of how he was guided over the Alleghany and down that river for twenty miles where a conference was held with the Delawares; how he pushed on and interviewed the French commandant near Lake Erie and was flatly told that the French intended to retain possession of the Ohio Valley at all costs, is common knowledge.

The remarkable test of the youth's mettle came in the return journey. What he had seen at the French concentration point led him to believe that they planned to fortify the juncture of the two tributaries of the Ohio, and he felt that not a moment was to be lost. Redpath, in a few words, tells of that dramatic race:

"It was now the dead of winter. Washington returned to Venango, and then, with Gist as his sole companion, left the river and struck into the woods. It was one of the most solitary marches ever made by man. There in the desolate wilderness was the future President of the United States. Clad in the robe of an Indian, with gun in hand and knapsack strapped to his shoulders; struggling through interminable snows; sleeping with frozen clothes on a bed of pine brush; breaking through the treacherous ice of rapid streams; guided by day by a pocket compass, and at night by the North Star, seen at intervals through the leafless trees; fired at by a prowling savage from his covert not fifteen steps away; thrown from a raft into the rushing Alleghany! escaping to an

island and lodging there until the river was frozen over; plunging again into the forest; reaching Gist's settlement and then the Potomac,—came the strong-limbed young ambassador back without wound or scar to the capital of Virginia. For his flesh was not made to be torn by bullets or to be eaten by the wolves. The defiant dispatch of St. Pierre was laid before Governor Dinwiddie, and the first public service of Washington was accomplished."

Washington was now fairly launched and he plunged into the coming struggle with all that amazing energy and dispatch which he ever exhibited. We find a company of thirty-three men hurried to the Ohio in the dead of winter to erect a fort in an effort to forestall and ward off the French. The young commander, now a major and adjutant-general of the Virginia militia, remains behind at Alexandria to recruit a regiment of men to support those sent by the Ohio Company, privately financed by Washington, Mason, and others.

By the following May (1754) he left the headwaters of the Potomac with his little band, only to find that the French had overpowered his advance guard and taken possession of the ground, naming it Fort du Quesne. And here an important struggle was yet to ensue, which would cast its influence for many years to come!

At the head of three companies he boldly

pushed on into the wilderness and made ready for the great contest. One day his spies brought word that a party of French was just six miles off. Washington determined upon a surprise attack and through the blackness of the night pushed on to this camp. He arrived at daybreak and without warning fell upon the unsuspecting party, killing, wounding or capturing most of it. He has been severely criticised for this act, but there is ample justification for it according to the rules of war, which are barbarous at the best.

He himself was soon repulsed at Fort Necessity. Crowded into this rude corral, for it was nothing better, surrounded on nearly all sides by higher ground which the French and Indians occupied and where they could look down into the fort, the young commander carried on an unequal fight from eleven o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock in the evening in a drenching rainstorm. Compelled at last to surrender, he wrung such terms from the French commander that it amounted to a barren victory for him.

Thus was fairly launched the French and Indian War. Washington, as we have seen was not only the author of the cause of it—his organization of the Ohio Company which disputed the French claims—but he fired the first shot and engaged in the first battle in it, which definitely committed the British government to war, in spite of its

previous protests of peace to the French government.

The next year Washington was with Braddock on that memorable and disastrous campaign. He had been appointed to a staff position by that testy and headstrong old general and was with Braddock at his headquarters at Carlyle House in Alexandria during the early stages of the campaign.

The failure of that campaign is common knowledge, yet the blame must not rest too heavily on General Braddock. He was a brave and skillful officer and it seems a bit unfair that he should have come down to us as the chief military numbskull in history. His genius for organization appears to have been unsurpassed, and his care and anxiety to insure the success of the campaign is plainly indicated in the evidence at hand.

His failure to comprehend the possibility of surprise and defeat were natural. It was natural that he should plan his campaign against the French—he knew their method of warfare. He ignored the savages but he failed to understand the psychological effect their presence might have upon his trained troops, due to the wild tales of their terrible actions in battle which the Virginians had doubtless told the troops in a spirit of fun as much as of truth. His refusal to listen to Washington is not to be wondered at; Washing-

ton was then a beardless youth, had been in only *one* battle and it was a failure!

The result of the whole campaign has been to project the name and fame of the young Virginian perhaps out of all proportion. He became a household word throughout the Colonies and it laid the foundation for his greater career years later by giving the rank and file confidence in his ability as a military man. In fact, it even served twenty years later to inspire the British commanders with an unusual caution and care in dealing with him in the field. For Washington, it tempered his natural impetuosity and gave him that phrase so often upon his lips in consulting with his officers, "Now, beware of rashness, beware of rashness!"

It will always remain a constant wonder to those who travel over the old Washington-Braddock trail from Alexandria to the scene of the defeat, that an army was successfully transported over the mountains, then a wilderness, and had their prize within grasp. Roads had to be built, many rushing streams crossed, artillery and baggage dragged over mountain ranges. It is now a hard trail for the modern automobile benefited as it is by hard-surfaced roads. And the mute reminder of the tragic ending of the campaign is the grave of Braddock at the side of the road, where

he was buried by that panic-stricken army in its flight.

There were two years of toil and hardship, during which Washington fell ill under a fever and could not perform his full share. But he recovered in time to join General Forbes in his campaign of 1758 against Fort du Quesne, where he commanded the advanced division. This campaign resulted in complete success.

After the successful termination of the war, Washington retired to private life and busied himself with the management and improvement of his estate, which had come to him on the death of his brother Lawrence. It was shortly before his retirement to his plantation, however, that he married Martha Custis, a young, beautiful and accomplished widow.

Washington's love affairs will doubtless always provoke more or less interest on the part of historians and students. There is just enough of mystery about many of them to whet the appetite and feed the curiosity. But it does not seem necessary to speculate or to infer where there is so little need for inferences.

As a young man, he wrote love verses—or tried to write them—and it is his misfortune that some of them have come down to us. I doubt if a man ever lived who didn't at some time try his hand in this direction. He mused and dreamed

over his "Lowland Beauty" who still remains a mystery. We find the young ladies at Belvoir inditing a round robin to him upon his return from the Braddock campaign in which they chide him for not coming to see them, and in which they warn him that unless he comes over that night they will come to Mt. Vernon *on foot* the following morning to see him!

This letter, signed by three young ladies, has such a good-natured, wholesome and intimate ring to it that it seems completely to refute the oft-repeated argument that he was bashful and ill at ease among the ladies. We find him, at the age of twenty-three, tall, awkward and fresh from his long wilderness campaign meeting the accomplished and beautiful Mary Philipse in New York City.

The famous young Virginian greatly interested this talented belle of the city. She had all the grace that comes from a sheltered and cultured life. And she was somewhat older than the young soldier, which doubtless gave her a poise that met approval with the young man. Her interest and beauty flattered him; it quickened into a false conviction that it amounted to more than the surface ripples indicated, and Washington proposed, it is said at the end of two days' acquaintance. The lady had not intended that the affair should have such a termination, but caught in her own trap,

she was forced to extricate herself as best she could. It is said that she "let him down gently," and he proceeded on his way to Boston, somewhat saddened and benumbed for his experience. Years later, he is credited with having remarked that he did not wait until the lady was in the proper mood. On the other hand, rumor has it that Mary Philipse excused the affair with the remark that his nose was impossible!

Fate plays queer tricks at times. It was in 1756 that Mary Philipse dangled the young frontiersman at her finger tips. In 1776, or just twenty years later, General George Washington confiscated the mansion of her husband, Colonel Roger Morris, in Haarlem Heights and occupied it as his headquarters. Mary Philipse and her husband, being Tories, had scurried for cover and they never came back again. One can visit her house today and meditate on the interesting history it has had—housing the notorious Madame Jumel and the equally notorious Aaron Burr during phases of its existence.

If playing a cautious game in waiting until the lady was in the proper mood applied in all cases, Washington might have been equally disappointed in his next venture. He met, wooed and won Martha Custis on just as short notice as he had attempted to win Mary Philipse. This time Fate was with him.

Carrying dispatches to the capital, Williamsburg, he stopped for lunch at the home of a friend, Major Chamberlayne, near William's Ferry. Mrs. Daniel Parke Custis, a young widow of twenty-six, was also a guest. He became interested, tarried into the afternoon. What is more natural then than to wait until morning? True, he carried in his breast pocket urgent dispatches respecting stores and provisions which were to be hurried by all possible speed to the army, but in the pursuit of duty many an ardent young soldier has hesitated, foundered and been caught in Love's meshes.

Returning from Williamsburg, we can imagine with what speed and dispatch he performed that part of his journey; he again lingered at William's Ferry, ardently laid his heart at the widow's feet, and was accepted. They were not married, however, until the termination of the Du Quesne campaign. Some have sneered at Washington's motives, insinuating that he was on the search for a rich wife, giving this as a reason for all the speculation among his friends as to his failure to marry. Perhaps some of the disappointed females in the neighborhood had something to do with these rumors; perhaps his experience with Mary Philipse had more to do with it. If such were his purpose, he certainly bagged his game. Martha Custis was the richest woman in all Virginia, her estate total-

ing \$250,000 in value. But those who examine the forty years they spent together are confounded for their pains, for there is every evidence that their affection for each other was very real and genuine and had no basis in their respective financial ratings. Such unions always have a faculty of landing on the rocks; it takes more than dollars to cement the matrimonial bonds together.

The next ten years were given over entirely to the peaceful pursuits of farming. He improved his estates, extended their boundaries and conducted countless experiments for the betterment of existing practices in agriculture. He was, first of all, a business man and his methodical nature greatly aided him in becoming the most successful planter in all North America.

He came to despise the institution of slavery because it was impossible to secure the most efficient labor through that means. We do not find that he ever exhibited any antagonism to that system on moral or ethical grounds. In a conversation with Benjamin Latrobe, a young engineer who visited him at Mt. Vernon in 1796, we find him exhibiting a very profound knowledge of agriculture and very much concerned over its future.

He held the idea that Indian corn was poisonous to the soil, yet confessed that he must grow it in order to feed his slaves economically. It

seemed not to have occurred to him that perhaps his tobacco had impoverished his soil. Mr. Latrobe brought the report to Washington that silver had just been found in the mountains. This took place: "He laughed most heartily upon the very mention of the thing. I explained to him the nature of the expectations formed of its productiveness and satisfied him of the probability that ore might exist there in considerable quantities. He made several very minute inquiries concerning it and then said 'that it would give him real uneasiness should any gold or silver mine be discovered that would tempt considerable capital into the prosecution of that object, and that he heartily wished for his country that it might contain no mines but such as the plow could reach, excepting only coal and iron.' "

Those were busy days at Mt. Vernon, and happy days. All thought of any future public service seems not to have been in his mind. It was his custom to arise in the morning before sun-up and spend his time in his study reading and writing until breakfast. He then sometimes worked another hour on his correspondence, but usually took to his horse after breakfast and rode over his farms overseeing the work that was in progress. He returned for dinner which was served at three o'clock in the afternoon, spending his time with the guests that might be at Mt. Vernon,

or in further reading until he retired which was always promptly at ten o'clock.

When separated from Mt. Vernon in answer to duty's call, we find his thoughts turning again and again to it and it is in these moments that his real love for the life he had led there crops out. In accepting the supreme command of the army from Congress, he said, many years later,

"Mr. President, though I am truly sensible of the high honor done me by this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty and exert every power I possess in the service and for the support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation. But lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with.

"As to pay, Sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those I doubt not they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

*James
Washington
to the
Congress
Sept 17
1775*

Years later, after the war had been won, we find him writing a letter to his young friend Lafayette, in which this love for his simple life is deeply reflected. He writes:

“At length, my dear Marquis, I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac; and under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, free from the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of a public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all, and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers.”

Shortly after his marriage he was elected to the House of Burgesses by his neighbors where he served with credit and satisfaction. His extreme modesty and inability to speak in public were never so evident as when he entered that hall for

the first time and heard the Speaker launch forth in a great eulogy of his achievements. Washington was so embarrassed that he found it impossible to say a word in reply, whereupon the Speaker uttered a gracious word which has outlived his original speech. He said: "Sit down, Mr. Washington, your modesty is equal to your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language that I possess."

Washington was more or less in the public service as a legislator and local militiaman during the whole of the period when the struggle with the Mother Country was coming to a head. Much of his activity at this time is discussed in the preceding chapter in the sketch on George Mason. We know that he was, from the very start, ardently in favor of resistance. He was no middle-of-the-ground man, nor was his winning over a slow process of time and circumstances. And one of the most outstanding conclusions we reach, in studying his activities at the time, is that he was almost from the first in the extreme radical camp. He favored drastic action; the most stringent methods of reprisal against British aggression.

In 1769, he wrote to George Mason: "That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defense of so valuable a blessing, on which all the good and evil of life depends, is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add,

should be the last resource, the dernier resort." And after it was all over, Mason recalled hearing Washington utter a similar sentiment, when he wrote to him: "I never forgot your declaration, when I had last the pleasure of being at your house in 1768, that you were ready to take your musket upon your shoulder whenever your country called upon you."

When there was a great deal of conjecture as to what should be done, and when later only Patrick Henry's eloquence turned the scales, Washington said in the Virginia Convention in 1774: "I will raise one thousand men, subsist them at my own expense and march myself at their head for the relief of Boston." It is reported that he remarked, when a delegate at the First Continental Congress in the same year, that he wished to God the liberties of the country could be determined by a single combat between himself and George III!

He was no milk-and-water patriot, no calm and easy-going planter willing to compromise, pushed into the struggle reluctantly, as some have insinuated. Up to his assumption of the chief command in the army he seems to have been as radical and impetuous as Henry, Mason and others, although perhaps more guarded in his public utterances. And he had a very impetuous strain in his character. We have seen it before, and it cropped out again and again in spite of his firm

determination to repress it in the interest of his duty. While at Boston, the inactivity exceedingly irked him and when he discovered that many of the soldiers were returning home when their periods of enlistment expired, he wrote: "Could I have known that such backwardness would have been discovered by the old soldiers to the service, *all the generals upon earth would not have convinced me of the propriety of delaying an attack upon Boston till this time.*" Again, he writes: "I know the unhappy predicament in which I stand. I know what is expected of me; I know my own weakness, and injuring the cause by declaring my wants, which I am determined not to do farther than unavoidable necessity brings acquainted with them. *My situation* is so irksome to me at times, that if I did not consult the public good more than my own tranquility, *I should long ere this have put everything on the cast of a die.*"

And he never lost sight of that guiding star of the "public good." Knowing the man and his temper for action, we can lay our fingers on many an instance where he consulted it contrary to his own inclinations as a man and a soldier. This ability to defer personal habits to the general welfare is a rare trait to find in a soldier; Sherman, in his campaign for Atlanta, is the only other American general to exhibit it. It requires a rare ability to conduct warfare by a code of tactics per-

sonally irksome to one's nature. Washington's nature must have tempted him many times to turn and fight it out in one mighty battle and let the issue hang on this supreme effort.

He was pushed steadily back, after the loss of New York, slowly giving way, seeing his army dwindle to almost nothing. When asked what he would do if Philadelphia were taken, he replied: "We will retreat beyond the Susquehannah; and thence, if necessary, to the Alleghany mountains!" Once in this struggle, he was no weakling or coward—he would carry it on until the object had been accomplished, or his army captured and himself killed.

When his overseer wrote him that a British raiding party had come to Mt. Vernon and threatened to burn down the mansion if he did not furnish the supplies they demanded, Washington replied: "It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard that in consequence of your non-compliance with their demand, they had burned my house and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration."

He was ever the soul of honor and honesty. When, in his youth, he got into a disagreement

with the British authorities over the value of his Virginia commission, and it was suggested that he might continue to hold the rank but exercise none of the prerogatives, he proudly replied: "Your offer has filled me with surprise; for if you think me capable of holding a commission that has neither rank nor emolument in it, you must entertain a very contemptible opinion of my weakness, or believe me to be more empty than the commission itself."

When one of his officers, becoming discouraged with the laxness of Congress, acquainted him with the feeling that the whole staff thought the only hope for the country was for Washington to assume dictatorship, his indignation at the dishonorable suggestion drove him to reply harshly:

Sir, with a mixture of surprise and astonishment I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary. I am at much loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which to me seems big with the greatest

mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person in whom your schemes are more disagreeable. . . . Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature.

Yet his disgust for the inefficiency of Congress came to the surface when he returned from a visit to that body, and wrote: "If I was to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and of men, from what I have seen, and heard, and in part know, I should in one word say that idleness, dissipation and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them." We have already quoted, in the preceding chapter, his anguished cry from Valley Forge when he writes Mason and demands to know where the first men of the country are in that hour of grave peril:

He stands revealed more and more as the supreme man of the times when we uncover the real picture of events. Like a rock in the midst of storm and stress, assailed by the foreign foe, sapped by the domestic enemies, graft, inefficiency and treason; tempted to action again and again when it seemed the quickest way for relief from his critics, indeed the normal course of active na-

tures, pushing it all aside, throttling his passions and desire even to save the cause, prudently charting his course in the direction of safety and caution.

The dangers of the Conway Cabal, which struck straight at Washington himself, as well as at the cause, he bore with the utmost control. Upon being acquainted of the designs the plotters entertained, he merely informs Conway of his knowledge of it, in these words: "A letter which I received last night, contained the following paragraph: 'In a letter from General Conway to General Gates he says, "Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak General and bad counsellors would have ruined it." ' ' "

A more ordinary man would have arrested the plotters, Conway, Gates and others, and have instantly fanned the country into partisan camps and have "injured the cause." Washington was too shrewd a judge to bring this about on his own motion even at the chance of being ruined personally. Conway later wrote him a letter in which he said: "You are in my eyes the great and good man," and the affair collapsed.

His handling of the questionable action of Lee at Monmouth reveals his promptness and severity when he was sure of his ground. Seeing Lee withdrawing his troops in the moment of victory and acting in a mysterious manner, Washington

spurred among the men, rallied them after strenuous efforts and sent them back after the enemy. Then he came up to Lee and in a towering fit of passion, "swore like an angel from heaven!" Lee smarted under his reproof which Washington knew how to administer to make it sting when his anger and scorn had been aroused. He wrote an insulting letter to Washington and the latter replied with another stinging reprimand. Lee then demanded a court-martial. Washington promptly ordered his arrest on three charges: "First, disobedience of orders in not attacking the enemy agreeably to repeated instructions; secondly, misbehavior before the enemy in making an unnecessary, disorderly and shameful retreat; thirdly, disrespect to the Commander-in-Chief in two letters written after the action." The above charges against Lee were sustained except that the word "shameful" was omitted.

Washington could tolerate personal abuse, and even extreme caution on the part of his officers, but he had the utmost scorn and all his terrible passions of temper were loosened upon those who exhibited the least hint of fear or cowardice in action. At Haarlem Heights, when he saw his men break and run on the approach of *sixty* British soldiers, his rage was boundless. He rode among them, snapping his pistol in their faces, beating them to the earth with his sword. Seeing

that they could not be rallied, with a fine show of scorn, he turned and coolly sat on his horse waiting to meet the enemy single-handed. At Princeton, in a moment when his men began to break, his voice was heard above the roar and din of battle, and he shouted, "Follow your General!" and pushed out between the lines, coolly sitting on his horse while the bullets rained like hail about him. At Germantown, where one hour of sunshine would have given him a great victory, he again exhibited his great personal bravery and rode into the thick of the fray. We are already familiar with his great bravery at Braddock's defeat, how the Indians at last concluded that he bore a charmed life and gave up trying to hit him.

He was a man apparently incapable of fear, and in the midst of a fit of temper terrible to face. When President and acquainted of St. Clair's defeat at the hands of the Indians, it is said that his rage was so great that it was impossible to enter his room for hours. After he retired to Mt. Vernon he caught a poacher from across the Potomac hunting on his land. He had warned the fellow to stay off his land and hearing a shot one day while on the lawn with his guests, he leaped into the saddle and hurried down to the river bank. His guests approached in time to see him leap at the hunter's canoe just as he was pushing off. The hunter raised his rifle in Washington's face, and

snapped the trigger, but the gun failed to discharge. Washington dragged him ashore and trounced him within an inch of his life. It is said that the man never hunted again on the forbidden soil!

His patience and gentleness, however, have never been surpassed in a public man in this country, with the possible exception of Lincoln. He sat for several years and listened to the bitter debates between Hamilton and Jefferson in Cabinet meetings, doing what he could to pour oil on the troubled waters, taking care not to offend Jefferson although he believed heartily in Hamilton's side of the argument. A weaker man would have thrown Jefferson out and secured a more tranquil time of it in his official family, but Washington had his eye ever on the "glorious cause" and he knew and understood the dangers of division and clashing parties. He exerted every effort to prevent dissension but when he saw that it was inevitable, his sadness and growing melancholy is almost tragic as we review his writings and utterances. He allowed Jefferson to retire knowing full well what it foreboded.

His patience was constantly tried by all manner of attacks—personal abuse in the blackguard press of the day, much of which was inspired by men who sided with Jefferson. He had to enter the lists in directions where it would not ordinarily

have been expected to be necessary. On a journey to Boston, John Hancock, then governor of Massachusetts determined to humiliate him and demonstrate that within a state the governor was superior to the president. He tried to arrange it so that Washington would call on him first. This Washington refused to do. Then Hancock wrote, pleading an indisposition for his failure to call. Washington replied stating that his plans made it necessary to leave Boston at a given time. Hancock then hurriedly answered that he was coming to pay his respects and Washington, with fine irony, in reply expressed concern for fear Hancock, in coming out, might add to his indisposition! No governor since has dared to challenge the authority of the president of the United States in such a way.

He had a fine sense of humor, although his sense of justice and propriety of things seldom allowed it to come to the surface. He was not the kind of man to wound the feelings of others. At one time the King of Spain sent him a very valuable jackass as a present for his breeding establishment at Mt. Vernon. When the question of naming it came up, Washington with a fine show of humor, suggested naming it for the donor. He seemed to like the joke so well that he repeated it in at least a dozen letters to friends in various parts of the country. A number of commentators

and friends have testified that he could laugh and laugh uproariously when amused.

In person, he was every inch a king. He had the quality of magnetism to a very marked degree. Even his own neighbors and friends testified to it, and the seeming power he had over any assemblage the minute he appeared. He was six feet three and one-half inches tall and superbly formed. His head was perfectly round, the forehead high, and the nose and chin prominent. The firm set of his jaw and the lower lip was due to an imperfectly fitted set of false teeth, and was not so apparent in his earlier days. His eyes were dark blue and his hair reddish in color. His complexion was ruddy, betokening his active out-door life. His shoulders were broad and his carriage erect, and he was, in every line, a superb athlete trained for any contest.

In religion, he was a life-long attendant at the Episcopal Church, much of the time while at Mt. Vernon at Christ Church in Alexandria, or at the Pohick Church nearer his plantation. He was, however, one of the supporters of the movement for the separation of church and state and a firm believer in religious freedom. There are evidences that he inclined to the deist movement then gaining headway, but he never openly espoused it. He recognized the great good the churches did and there is never so much as a protest against what

he heard at any of the services, if he did disagree. He knew too well the value of his example upon the country at large.

The story of his death has been preserved to us by his faithful secretary, Tobias Lear. On December 12th, (1799) it snowed about three inches; the mercury was at 30 degrees and the wind from the northeast. Washington rode about his plantations, as was his custom, for about five hours. When he returned, he complained of feeling chilly. Lear protested that Washington had got wet, but the latter said his greatcoat had kept him dry. Lear, however, saw that his hair was full of snow and that his neck was wet, but Washington went in to dinner which was waiting without changing his clothes, as was his usual custom. That evening he appeared as well as usual.

The next morning, however, he had such a severe cold that he went out only a little while to mark some trees on the lawn which were to be cut down. He became very hoarse during the day, but upon fears being expressed for his condition, he made light of it and said he would "let it go as it came." During the evening he read aloud from the newspapers as was his custom, as much as his hoarseness would permit. Lear then read to him some of the debates of the Virginia Assembly, which greatly interested him. He retired to bed in an unusually cheerful manner, making light of his

cold. Between two and three o'clock in the morning, however, he awoke Mrs. Washington and remarked to her that he was very ill and had had an ague. He was then speaking with difficulty and breathing hard. He refused to permit her to call a servant, however, fearing that she would take cold.

At daylight, the slave Caroline came to light the fire, and she was sent to summon Lear, who sent a note to Dr. Craik, Washington's lifelong friend. In the meantime, Mrs. Washington prepared a mixture of molasses, vinegar and butter, but the sick man could not swallow a drop. He appeared to be almost suffocated.

"Mr. Rawlins (an overseer) came in soon after sunrise and prepared to bleed him," says Lear. "When the arm was ready, the General, observing that Rawlins appeared to be agitated, said, as well as he could speak, 'Don't be afraid,' and after the incision was made, he observed, 'The orifice is not large enough.' However, the blood ran pretty freely. Mrs. Washington, not knowing whether bleeding was proper or not in the General's situation, begged that much might not be taken from him, lest it might be injurious, and desired me to stop it; but when I was about to untie the string, the General put up his hand to prevent it, and as soon as he could speak, he said, 'More.' Mrs. Washington being still very un-

easy, lest too much blood should be taken, it was stopped after about half a pint was taken from him.

“Finding that no relief was obtained from the bleeding, and that nothing would go down the throat, I proposed bathing the throat externally with salvolatile which was done; during the operation which was with the hand, he observed, ‘ ’Tis very sore.’ A piece of flannel dipped in salvolatile was then put around his neck. His feet were also bathed in warm water. This, however, gave no relief.”

Shortly after, Dr. Craik arrived and Dr. Brown and Dr. Dick were sent for. During the remainder of the day up to four o'clock he was bled again three times, and every effort made to produce ease for him, but he yielded to no treatment. He then asked Lear to summon Mrs. Washington to his bedside and he asked her to go to his desk and bring him two wills she would find there. He gave her one and asked her to destroy it, which she did. He then handed her the other one and asked her to put it away in her closet.

Lear then went to his bedside and took his hand. “He said to me, ‘I find I am going, my breath cannot continue long; I believed from the first attack it would be fatal—do you arrange and record all my late military letters and papers—

arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than anyone else, and let Mr. Rawlins finish recording my other letters.' He then asked if I recollected anything which it was essential for him to do, as he had a very short time to continue with us. I told him that I could recollect nothing, but that I hoped he was not so near his end. He observed, smiling, that he certainly was, and that it was the debt which we all must pay; he looked to the event with perfect resignation."

During the afternoon, he suffered great pain and had increased difficulty to draw his breath. Lear lay upon the bed and endeavored to raise him from time to time and comfort him. The General shifted about in bed a great deal, trying to secure ease from his pain. Lear says: "He appeared penetrated with gratitude for my attentions, and often said, 'I am afraid I shall fatigue you too much'; and upon my answering him, that I could feel nothing but a wish to give him ease, he replied, 'Well, it is a debt which we must pay to each other, and I hope, when you want aid of this kind, you will find it.'"

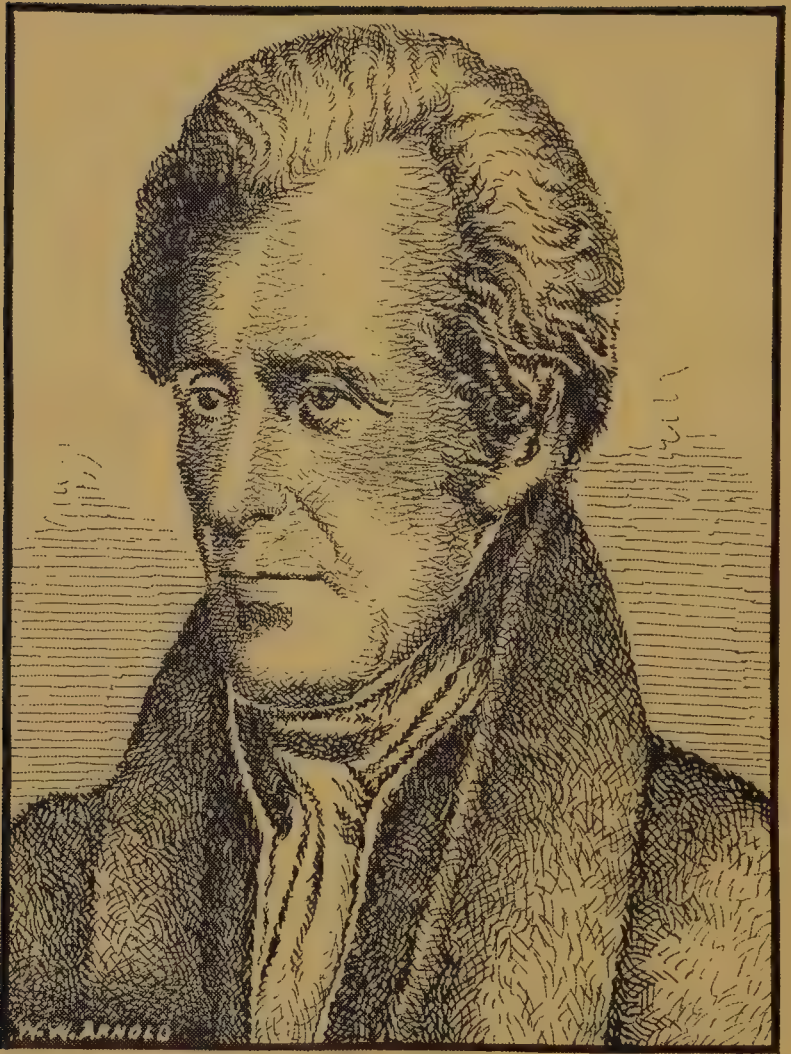
"About five o'clock Dr. Craik came again into the room, and upon going to the bedside the General said to him: 'Doctor, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go. I believed from my first attack, that

I should not survive it. My breath cannot last long.'” Later he thanked the physicians and asked them to let him die quietly. At ten o'clock in the evening, he made several attempts to speak to Lear before he could do it. Then he said: “I am just going. Have me decently buried, and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than three days after I am dead.” Lear was so overcome that he could not speak, and Washington looked at him again, and said: “Do you understand?” Then Lear replied: “Yes, sir.” “'Tis well,” he answered.

A little later, he died, Dr. Craik holding one hand and Lear clasping the other to his breast, Mrs. Washington sitting at the foot of the bed. Dr. Craik placed his hand over the General's eyes and he passed without a struggle or a sigh. Soon Mrs. Washington asked, in a firm voice, “Is he gone?” and when she knew that he was, answered in a plain voice, “'Tis well. All is now over. I have no more trials to pass through. I shall soon follow him.”

In this simple, yet majestic account of his passing, one gets the best picture of the man that he was. So strongly built that he died with difficulty, yet calm and assured, knowing all the time that the end had come, watching it curiously, doing what he was told to do as a matter of duty to

his doctors, grateful for the attentions shown him, sensible of the duty we owe one another in such times, conscious that the price we pay for life is death, he went down to the last, a great and commanding will, the like of which we have not yet seen on this continent. Well did Jefferson observe on the floor of Congress, "Truly, a great man has this day fallen in Israel."



ANDREW JACKSON

His outstanding trait was his tremendous will power, which drove a lagging physical self over every obstacle.

ANDREW JACKSON

It is seldom difficult to understand and comprehend the Jacksons. They are so delightfully human—so frightfully human, if you please!—that we know and feel them on the spot. They have the weaknesses of all of us, and they have them magnified to such a degree that they become their very virtues. They are capable of great hates, of making great errors and of repenting them with equally great intensity, of great determinations and great deeds. In the record of their struggles, they merely mirror the ups and downs, the victories and the defeats of the average man, though on a grander scale. They have the ordinary qualities intensified to such a degree that they often assume a sort of grandeur.

Andrew Jackson sprang out of the very lowest strata of pioneer life. His father and mother had emigrated from the north of Ireland to the Waxhaw settlements in North Carolina two years before his birth. Some months before the birth of the subject of this sketch, the elder Andrew Jackson sickened and died. He left behind a wife and two sons, a little log cabin and a cleared field in which one crop had been produced.

The death of the head of the family and the coming of the youngest son completely changed

the family outlook. The mother won a scanty living by spinning flax and weaving linen in which she was especially skilled. She worked with ceaseless activity to gain the money with which to provide a liberal education for Andrew, desiring that he should become a minister in the Presbyterian Church. But the grim hand of war, and the inclinations of the boy, combined to defeat that dream.

The Revolutionary War laid a heavy toll upon the Jackson family. The two brothers were killed, one dying of wounds following a battle while serving under Colonel William Richardson Davie, and the other younger brother died of wounds and disease incurred in neighborhood campaigns in which he and young Andrew took part. Jackson, himself, but for his remarkable will power and the self-sacrifice of his mother, would have died from the effects of his wounds, prison starvation and small-pox. But after he had recovered, his mother set out on another errand of mercy to the prisoners and died herself.

It is out of these intense experiences that whole lives are shaped and pointed. Impressions are made, habits are formed and color given to every subsequent act. Young Andrew Jackson, at the formative period of his life, felt the grim hand of war in all its terrible aspects; he suffered from the ravages of disease and famine, and it had the effect of giving a certain bitterness to his whole

life. He hated the British with a savage intensity which even age did not soften.

As a member of a party of loyal farmers gathering at a rendezvous to defend their homes, betrayed by a Tory and surprised by a troop of Tarleton's cavalry, they were mostly scattered and killed. Jackson and his youngest brother were captured. Ordered by the leader of the troop to clean his boots, young Andrew hotly replied that he was a prisoner of war and entitled to be treated as such. For answer the officer drew his sword and struck a savage blow at the youth's head. Jackson warded off the blow partially with his upraised arm and thereby received two wounds—one in his arm and a great gash on his forehead which he carried to his grave.

He was then hustled off to the prison camp, several days' journey, without food or water. When the prisoners attempted to quench their thirst by scooping up water in their hands as they forded streams, their hands were struck down by the captors. In camp, they were subjected to even greater menaces for small-pox broke out and was allowed to rage unchecked, the dead and dying mingled with the living. Starvation made all an easy prey to the disease.

Mrs. Jackson appeared on the scene and by clever work succeeded in getting her two boys and some other prisoners exchanged for British sol-

diers. Then she set off on horseback with her sick and dying youngsters. It was a terrible journey. Jackson's brother was so weak that he had to be supported on horseback; it was his last journey as he died soon after reaching the Waxhaw. Andrew managed to win his struggle for life, although his life hung in the balance for weeks.

The death of Jackson's mother occurred before he was fifteen, another circumstance which doubtless played a considerable share in his future conduct. Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown in October, 1781, and it was fourteen months later before Charleston was given up by the British. This, too, exerted another influence upon the youth.

A number of Charleston families were living in the Waxhaw settlement, pending the withdrawal of the British from their city. They set an example in their manner of living which was corrupting to a boy of Jackson's love for companionship and excitement. He became acquainted with the young men and was betrayed by this acquaintance into habits which were far beyond his resources. His passion for horse racing was developed at this time, and he also indulged in gambling and gaming.

When Charleston was evacuated and the Whig families returned to their homes, Jackson found it very dull in the Waxhaw, and he determined to

follow his friends to the city. Accordingly, he mounted his horse, took such cash as he had, and departed. His experiences were varied and colorful and ended only when he was at the very end of his resources, in a characteristic flourish often noticed in the turning points in his long career. Jackson always seemed to possess a quality of resiliency—whatever the odds against him.

He had run through his money, had a considerable bill with his landlord and possessed only his horse. In this extremity, Fate seemed to intervene. A man who heard the story from Jackson's own lips says: "He strolled one evening down the street and was carried into a place where some persons were amusing themselves at a game of dice, and much betting was in progress. He was challenged for a game by a person present, by whom a proposal was made to stake two hundred dollars against the fine horse on which Jackson had come to Charleston. After some deliberation he accepted the challenge. Fortune was on his side; the wager was won and paid. He forthwith departed, settled his bill the next morning, and returned to his home, 'My calculation,' said he, speaking of this incident, 'was that, if a loser in the game, I would give the landlord my saddle and bridle, as far as they would go toward the payment of his bill, ask a credit for the balance, and walk away from the city; but being successful,

I had new spirits infused into me, left the table, and from that moment to the present time I have never thrown dice for a wager.' ”

His fling had the tendency of settling him somewhat and he went to work in his home neighborhood with more purpose than he had ever exhibited before. It seems that he was a teacher in an old field school for approximately two years, and earned money in other work. In the winter of 1784-85, the young man resolved to become a lawyer, mounted his horse and set off for Salisbury, North Carolina, seventy-five miles away. He entered the law office of Spruce McCay, one of the leaders of the bar. Jackson spent the next two years as a clerk and student in the office of this lawyer, and completed his studies with Colonel John Stokes, who had been severely wounded at the Waxhaw massacre. In 1787, Jackson was licensed to practice law in the courts of the state. He was then twenty years of age.

Young lawyers have ever been confronted with the problem of winning a practice. In the home neighborhood one must compete with the old established members of the bar; the confidence of the neighbors must be aroused in the youth, and it is necessary to live down the preconceived notions everyone has about one's ability. It is a long, hard grind—starvation, watchful waiting, a game of endurance and patience.

The active and energetic young man usually departs for the green pastures of some distant location where many of the old handicaps are not found. He "grows up with the country" and oftentimes becomes established sooner and wins a larger recognition. This Andrew Jackson did. He had no genius for waiting; his nature craved excitement and action. The lure of the frontier was great and he followed it. In the summer of 1788, he joined a party of settlers bound for Nashville, Tennessee, which was then Washington County, North Carolina. They had to cross a mountain range, march through two infested Indian regions, withstand all the hardships of pioneering, but all this did not deter them. Upon reaching the new settlement, Jackson assumed his duties as public prosecutor, to which position he had been appointed by his friend John McNary, judge of the superior court.

The young solicitor went to "board" with the Widow Donelson who was living in a blockhouse and running an inn. With her were her daughter Rachel and worthless son-in-law, Lewis Robards. Robards, it seems, had sunk deep into his cups and made no effort to live up to manhood's estate. Not only that, but his conduct towards his beautiful wife was what one might expect to find from a common drunkard. It was natural that Jackson should come to know the unequal struggle going

on, being now a member of the household. He was quick to resent wrongs grossly inflicted, and doubly quick to defend womanhood. His sense of justice was aroused and with it his sympathy for the unhappy young wife forced to support this worthless wreck. And between sympathy and love there is such a fine dividing line, in cases like this, that only philosophers can discover it.

In the meantime, Jackson was unusually busy. The country was thriving, growing by tremendous strides. All the hurly-burly, boisterous, noisy contentions of the frontier attended its expansion. The settlements were populated by all kinds and classes of people; there was a nervous, eager search for power and property. Lawsuits, duels, brawls and personal encounters were common. The real difficulty facing the officers of justice was to see that the quick-shooting and self-sufficient frontiersman really resorted to the law!

A less courageous man would never have done in the office of public prosecutor. It took a man of nerve to go into a wild and untamed region, filled with unprincipled men, and attempt to bring them to the bar of justice for wrongs inflicted, duties undischarged. Yet Jackson, youth that he was and frail in figure as he was, was just the man to turn the trick. There was something in his carriage, something in the burning intensity of his

manner that warned even these ruffians to have a care.

He prospered greatly for a young man and in one year (1794) we read that he appeared as counsel in two hundred twenty-eight cases out of a total of three hundred ninety-seven tried in the courts. Clients were for the most part land poor and they paid for their legal aid in land. At one time, Jackson owned a total of twenty-five thousand acres of wild land, mostly received in lieu of fees. As a basis of comparing values, he bought the original Hermitage farm near Nashville, which comprised six hundred fifty acres for eight hundred dollars, then considered a high price. But the Hermitage farm contains perhaps the best land in all the vicinity of Nashville, and Jackson exhibited a rare judgment when he acquired it, even at a high figure.

Jackson was by no means a stern partisan of the court method of settling disputes. Indeed, in the many affairs in which he became entangled personally we do not recall a single instance where he resorted to arbitration and peaceful settlement in the courts. It was customary, when men were not satisfied with the judgment handed down, to repair outside the court room and fight it out, the judge, attorneys and jury often looking on.

In 1796, the first Constitutional Convention assembled in Nashville to prepare a state constitu-

tion. Jackson was one of the five members sent from Davidson County, and in June Tennessee became the sixteenth state. In the following fall Andrew Jackson was elected the first member of Congress to represent the state. He arrived in Philadelphia in December and on the third day of the session saw General Washington enter the chamber and deliver his final address to Congress.

What impression this made upon the young member from the youngest state, we do not know definitely. One would think that such an occasion, marked by the venerable hero who had made possible the security of the government more than any other man present, would have exerted some happy influence. But we must remember that it was an age of crimination, of personal abuse and vituperation never equalled since in this country. The seeds of dissension were already springing up.

It was customary then for each House to prepare an answer to the President's speech. In the draft proposed highly eulogistic sentiments were addressed to Washington. The followers of Jefferson raised a two days' debate over this and finally Edward Livingston moved to strike out the words, "wise, firm and patriotic administration." This was voted down. Then Mr. Blount of North Carolina demanded the yeas and nays in order that posterity might see that *he* did not consent. The result was sixty-seven for; twelve against.

The original "wilful twelve," no doubt! And among the number was Andrew Jackson of Tennessee.

Jackson returned home at the end of the session in March, but during the summer was appointed to the United States Senate to fill a vacancy. He served through one session and then resigned. Soon afterward he was elected by the Legislature to a position on the bench of the state supreme court, then considered the second "best" position in the state. The salary was six hundred dollars per annum, whereas the governor received seven hundred fifty dollars. Jackson remained on the bench for six years. He took the appointment originally because he wanted to become a merchant and he thought that he would have time between sessions of court to visit Philadelphia and lay in his stock of goods.

In the meantime, however, his growing political popularity and his ambition brought him into a personal conflict with Governor Sevier, old Revolutionary hero and first governor of the state. The major-generalship of the state militia was vacant. Jackson knew that Sevier would probably win the post because of his military experience and political service to the state. It was a position and honor which every man in the commonwealth coveted. So Jackson boldly entered the lists and made a race against his foe. The election was in

the hands of the field officers. When they came to vote, it was found to be a tie, so the Governor of the State had to vote off the tie. He decided in favor of Jackson. This victory was especially calculated to wound and gall the old soldier who had won so many battles.

The panic of 1798-99, however, dealt the ambitious young politician a hard blow. His Philadelphia creditors called his notes and he discovered that he had to raise *real* money, something that was then almost unknown on the frontier. Jackson never cared for complications of any kind, and he detested being in debt worse than all. He determined to sell off all his property, go out of business, resign from the judgeship and start all over again. To meet his notes he sacrificed most of his wild lands, sold his improved home near Nashville, closed out his stock of goods, left the bench and went out to the Hermitage farm, built a log cabin and began anew.

This decision was characteristic of the man. Probably no other great military and political figure in our history has been so subject to snap-judgment, to the quick and ready determination to take drastic action. He seems, oftentimes, to have sacrificed much more than was necessary, to have let himself in for a good deal more trouble and work than was absolutely needed. But that was the way of the man; to think was to act. Some-

times, his acts were the better unperformed, but in this he merely displayed common weaknesses found in all men.

Most of his quarrels hinged on just such sudden turnings of his mind. In many instances, he seems to have determined not to be drawn into a controversy and exhibits a fine and rare patience. Then, just as the matter is apparently dying out, he suddenly changes his mind, becomes the aggressor, determines to fight at all costs. This occurred in two of his famous quarrels at least; the duel with Charles Dickinson and the feud with the Bentons.

The Dickinson duel is beyond doubt the most famous and, perhaps, the most colorful, of all of Jackson's many escapades. Charles Dickinson, a young lawyer and a dead shot, was reported to have uttered some disparaging words about Mrs. Jackson, the former Mrs. Rachel Robards, which was to the fiery militia general the one unpardonable sin. Jackson called upon Dickinson and asked if he had used the language reported. Dickinson replied that if he had used any such words, he must have been drunk. They talked it over and separated in a friendly manner.

Some time later a report was brought to Jackson that Dickinson had again used the same language. Jackson then went to Dickinson's father-in-law, Captain Ervin, and urged him to see to it that Dickinson acted like a gentleman while in his

cups. Jackson added: "I wish no quarrel with him. He is used by my enemies in Nashville who are urging him on to pick a quarrel with me. Advise him to stop in time."

Then, when things seemed to be in fair way to be smoothed out, a trivial incident brought the whole controversy to a head. Another young lawyer named Swann, circulated a report that Jackson had accused the owners of Plowboy (a race-horse) of paying their forfeit in notes of less value than agreed upon. Jackson in replying to Swann wrote a letter in which he went out of his way to call Dickinson "a base poltroon and cowardly talebearer," and asked Swann to show the letter to Dickinson, and that if Dickinson desired satisfaction he would be glad to meet him on the field.

Naturally, Dickinson replied in kind and Jackson promptly challenged him. It was agreed that the duel should be fought on the banks of the Red River in Kentucky, the weapons were to be pistols and the men were to face each other eight paces apart.

It is not necessary to recount all the retails of that grim tragedy. Suffice it to say that Jackson determined to *let* Dickinson have the first shot, a bit of strategy thought to be foolhardy because of Dickinson's unerring aim. On the way to the field, at twenty-four paces, he put four balls into a spot

that could be covered with a silver dollar, and at the same distance, cut strings. But Jackson had a plan of campaign which made it wise to follow this course.

His extreme slenderness of figure probably never occurred in another man of his height. He was wearing a large coat which was carelessly buttoned over his breast. By twisting his waist slightly within this great coat, he deceived the keen-eyed Dickinson, who fired where he thought Jackson's heart was, but instead only grazed his ribs.

A puff of dust was seen to fly out of Jackson's coat. He quickly clamped his left arm over his breast and prepared to fire at Dickinson. The latter, unnerved at his apparent failure to even hit his enemy, recoiled from the mark. Jackson turned to the second who sternly ordered him back to the mark, drawing his pistol as he did so. Dickinson dropped his pistol.

Jackson took deliberate aim, but his pistol did not go off. He hesitated, looked at it and discovered that it had stopped at half cock. He recocked it, aimed again and fired. Dickinson's face blanched, he reeled and was caught in the arms of friends, who gently lowered him to the ground. He bled to death a short time later.

Jackson left the field and stopped at a house for some buttermilk. It was then discovered that he

was wounded, and even his shoe was full of blood. He had kept his wound to himself, as he said, because he did not want Dickinson even to have the satisfaction of knowing that he had *touched* him!

A good many stories have been told as to the manner in which Jackson saved his life in this duel. One goes to the effect that Jackson placed an ivory miniature of his wife in a pocket over his heart and that this deflected Dickinson's bullet and saved his life. This seems to be pure fiction, however. We have ample evidence that the account given above is the true one. Two of Jackson's ribs were shattered and the ball passed around the ribs, tearing a deep gash which never healed properly and which caused Jackson considerable pain and inconvenience as long as he lived.

The Dickinson duel occurred in 1806 and it was not until after the Battle of New Orleans that Jackson regained state-wide popularity. Even his friends admit that it told heavily on him and that during the six or eight years following he could not have been elected to a single office in the state requiring a majority of votes. He was universally looked upon, outside his own circle of friends as a turbulent, violent and passionate man.

It is interesting, in passing, to note that when Colonel Aaron Burr came West on his two trips that he sojourned at the Hermitage from five to eight days on each passing. Jackson seems to have

been entirely "taken in" by the smooth and unprincipled schemer from the East and to have gone to great pains to show him unusual attention and hospitality. It can be said in mitigation, however, that he was not without company in this mistake. The city of Nashville accorded Burr a public banquet and even Henry Clay appeared in two law suits as counsel for Burr. Burr was the pride of all the western country and looked upon as the champion of the under classes. His duel with Hamilton had served to elevate him in the West rather than diminish his popularity.

When Burr was arrested and tried at Richmond, Jackson was summoned as a witness. We find him haranguing a crowd in which he defended Burr and denounced Jefferson so vehemently that it hurt him greatly a few years later. Madison, then Secretary of State, took offense at it and held a grudge against Jackson which told heavily against the latter when Madison was president during the War of 1812.

Five days after the news of declaration of war reached Jackson, he tendered his services and that of his militia to the government. This prompt offer, regardless of differences, made a great impression upon Madison and his Cabinet and before long Jackson was ordered to proceed by water to New Orleans, join Wilkinson and effect the defense of that city. He reached Natchez,

was held there for a long time and then received an order from the authorities at Washington to disband his men and accept "the thanks of the President of the United States." He was, therefore, dismissed without pay, without provision for transportation of his men home! Jackson determined to disobey the order and march his men home before discharging them. To do this he incurred obligations for food and forage that amounted to a large sum. The government seemed determined for a time to let Jackson squirm out of it as best he could, and but for the aid of Colonel Thomas Benton it would have ruined Jackson financially and otherwise.

In spite of this service which Benton had rendered him, Jackson was soon drawn into a quarrel with Benton because of a disagreement with Benton's brother Jesse. There seems to have been little real basis for a quarrel, just a fanning of flames by meddlers, an apparent patching up of the difficulty, then the characteristic turning of Jackson and a pressing of matters into a violent consequence.

In the end he blazed out, brushed old friendship aside and swore by the Eternal that he would horsewhip Tom Benton the first time they met. They met in Nashville on a third of September. The two Bentons, in order to avoid Jackson, had not gone to their accustomed inn. In the after-

noon Jackson, in company with his friend Colonel Coffee, rode into town and put up his horse. On his way to the postoffice, he accidentally confronted Benton and his brother.

When opposite him, he suddenly whirled, his whip in his right hand, and shouted: "Now, you damned rascal, I'm going to punish you. Defend yourself!"

Benton made an effort to reach his pistol in his breast pocket. Jackson beat him on the draw, however, pulling a pistol from a pocket behind him and presented it against Benton's chest, pressing him back into the hotel. Jesse Benton then drew his pistol and fired at Jackson. His gun was loaded with two balls and a large slug. The slug struck Jackson's left shoulder, giving it a horrible wound, one ball entered the muscle of the left arm lodging in the bone and the other hit the wall of the room. The shock from the charge was so great that Jackson fell on his face and remained there, bleeding profusely.

Colonel Coffee then entered, drawing his pistol. Supposing that Colonel Benton had wounded Jackson, he hit Benton over the head with his gun. The latter slipped and fell backwards down a flight of stairs. Jackson's friends then got him to his room in the inn and attempted to stop the flow of blood. Mrs. Jackson, years later, said it

was not stopped until the General had soaked two mattresses through and was nearly dead.

In the meantime, the Creek Indians took Fort Mims and massacred over four hundred soldiers and settlers. This occurred in Alabama but it constituted a grave threat to Tennessee and Jackson's enemies thought they saw a chance to get rid of him. They accordingly inflamed the people and got a bill through the Legislature ordering the major-general of militia to proceed at once against the Indians. Jackson was still prostrate on his bed, unable to rise, although about three weeks had elapsed since his quarrel with the Bentons. His enemies planned, as soon as it was proved that he couldn't take the field, to declare the office vacant and displace him.

The law provided that a bill had to be passed on three successive days by the Legislature before it could become law. On the evening of the first day Jackson called one of his friends and asked if the bill would pass. On being assured that it would, he issued orders to his men to assemble at Fayetteville, near the Alabama frontier. When his friend suggested he regretted the general entitled to command was not in a condition to take the field, Jackson replied:

"The devil in hell he is not!"

Enoch Parsons, the friend in question, adds: "He gritted his teeth with anguish as he uttered

these words, and groaned, when he ceased to speak. I told him that I hoped I was mistaken, but that I did not believe he could just then take the field. . . . Two hours afterward I received fifty or more copies of his orders, which had been made out and printed in the meantime, and ordered the troops to rendezvous at Fayetteville, eighty miles on the way, on Thursday. At the bottom of the order was a note stating that the health of the commanding general was *restored*.

"That evening, or the next day, I saw Dr. May, General Jackson's principal physician, and inquired of him if he thought General Jackson could possibly march. Dr. May said that no other man could, and that it was uncertain whether, with his spunk and energy, *he* could; but that it was entirely uncertain what General Jackson could do in such circumstances."

Jackson was so weak from the loss of blood, even though three weeks had elapsed, that he fainted in getting out of bed. On the march to Fayetteville, the doctor testifies that they had to stop him at frequent intervals and bathe him from head to foot in solutions of sugar of lead to keep down the inflammation, but steadily he pressed on!

In his anguish of body and spirit, he said: "It is my punishment that I should have wasted my strength in a private quarrel at a time when my country was so sorely in need of it."

His left shoulder was so badly shattered that he could not bear the weight of his shoulder-straps upon it; he suffered for months from dysentery and during one battle with the Indians was in such pain from it that he had to be strapped over a bent sapling with his arms hanging limp from his shoulders. In camp, he had to hang over the back of his chair. He was in the field for eighteen months, without medical attention, suffering from these pains and wounds, and was contracting tuberculosis on top of them!

He routed the Indians, after overcoming tremendous obstacles. Poorly provisioned, without forage and often with only a scant day's rations for his men, facing mutiny single-handed and putting it down, emerging at last at New Orleans where, against the most tremendous odds a commander in that whole war ever faced, he won the greatest victory and became the hero of the war.

It is not necessary to recount the details of that campaign and the unequal contest he waged there; first to restore public tranquillity and impress upon the excited citizenry the feeling that a vigorous defense was not only possible but capable of victory. It is sufficient in passing to point out a fact given little prominence in history; namely, that Jackson was such a sick man that all he could eat was a little rice broth. He knew the need for a confident manner to the people of the city and his

true condition was well concealed. For more than a month he slept in his uniform. One reason was that he expected to be aroused any minute to action, and was, indeed, busy far into every night speeding the plans for defense. Another reason was that it was very painful to him to get in and out of his clothes.

For six years, he served as commander of the army in the Southern Department. He had much to do with gaining Florida and violated many rules of international warfare and diplomacy in bringing it about. He got into a difficulty in New Orleans and suffered a loss of some of his prestige because of his high-handed methods.

In 1821, he retired from public service at the age of fifty-four, wasted in body and disgusted in spirit at public office. He seemed destined to spend the rest of his days in the peaceful occupation of a planter. But in 1824, he was made a candidate for the presidency. There can be no doubt but that he was the choice of most of the people and carried the votes of more of the states in the electoral college. But the election was thrown into the House of Representatives and after considerable heat had been generated, John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts was elected, with the aid of Henry Clay's supporters.

The Jackson men instantly raised the charge that Clay had entered into a corrupt deal with

Adams whereby Clay was to elect Adams and the latter was to make Clay his Secretary of State. There seems now to be no evidence that such a bargain was ever made, but subsequent events lent color to it. It served to put Jackson in the White House for eight years and to keep Clay out of it!

Jackson felt with all the intensity of his nature, that he had been defrauded out of the presidency and he dedicated all his time and amazing energy to the purpose of getting even. From then on his consuming ambition was to win the presidency. That he did win is common knowledge.

He won an overwhelming victory in 1828 against Adams, receiving one hundred seventy-eight votes in the electoral college to eighty-three for Adams. Mrs. Jackson is reported to have said, when informed that her husband had been elected: "Well, for Mr. Jackson's sake, I am glad; for my own part, I never wished it."

A great fête was planned by the citizens of Nashville to be tendered to Jackson and Mrs. Jackson just before their departure for Washington. The dinner was to have been given on the evening of December twenty-third, but on the evening of the preceding day, without warning, Mrs. Jackson passed away. The General was profoundly shocked, and it was a long time before he would believe that she had really breathed her last.

The loss of his beautiful Rachel made a profound and sorrowful impression upon the fiery warrior. It is said that he gradually dropped his profanity, and that it was only upon extreme occasions that he ever used it again. Mrs. Jackson had long tried to persuade him to join church and acknowledge his salvation, which he had refused to do. It was not until he retired from the presidency that he did this. In August, 1838, he wrote: "I would long since have made this solemn public dedication to Almighty God, but knowing the wickedness of this world, and how prone men are to evil, that the scoffer of religion would have cried out, 'Hypocrisy! he has joined the church for political effect,' I thought it best to postpone this public act until my retirement to the shades of private life, when no false imputation could be made that might be injurious to religion." It was 1842, however, before he did this.

He was taken into the Presbyterian church in the little brick structure on the Hermitage farm which he had built for his wife. The Rev. Dr. Edgar of Nashville performed the ceremony. In the course of his questioning of the candidate, the minister said: "General, there is one more question which it is my duty to ask you. Can you forgive all your enemies?"

Jackson hesitated. "My political enemies I can freely forgive," he said, "but as for those who

abused me when I was serving my country in the field, and those who attacked me for serving my country—doctor, that is a different matter.”

After some argument and deliberation Jackson consented to forgive them all. From that day until his death he took great comfort in his Bible and hymn-book, which he pronounced *hime*-book.

Immediately after the funeral of his beloved wife, it was necessary for him to proceed at once to Washington in order to reach it for his inauguration. It is said that he grew “twenty years older in a night.” The pain from his old wounds, his wastage from disease and the growing lung trouble, together with this great personal loss profoundly affected his temper. In these private burdens are to be found an explanation for many of his public acts. His feuds and quarrels in the White House were none the less violent and intense than many of his old private altercations, although not of a physical nature.

His service in the field had aroused all his patriotism to such a high pitch that he was, in spite of misguided judgment and prejudice in many instances, quick to sense an attack upon the integrity of the government and as quick to forestall it. His greatest public service during his eight years in the White House was undoubtedly his quick and stern suppression of the secessionist movement on the part of John C. Calhoun and South Carolina.

The evidence strongly points to the ambition of Calhoun as being responsible for the whole agitation, although it was espoused by many other men in southern public life. If there was a design, they apparently counted on Jackson to aid, or at least, not to hinder their plans. In this they soon discovered their grave error.

Jackson wrote as follows on May 1, 1833 to the Rev. A. J. Crawford of Georgia: "I have had a laborious task here, but nullification is dead, and its actors and courtiers will only be remembered by the people to be execrated for their wicked designs to sever and destroy the only good Government on the globe, and that prosperity and happiness we enjoy over every other portion of the world. Haman's gallows ought to be the fate of all such ambitious men who would involve the country in a civil war, and all the evils in its train, that they might reign and ride on its whirlpools and direct the storm. The free people of the United States have spoken and consigned these wicked demagogues to their doom. Take care of your nullifiers you have among you. Let them meet the indignant frowns of every man who loves his country. The tariff, it is now well known, was a mere pretext. Its burdens were on your coarse woolens; by the law of July, 1832, coarse woolens was reduced to five per cent for the benefit of the South. Mr. Clay's bill takes it up, and closes it

with woolens at fifty per cent, reduces it gradually down to twenty per cent, and there it is to remain, and Mr. Calhoun and all the nullifiers agree to the principle. The cash duty and the home valuation will be equal to fifteen per cent more, and after the year 1842 you will pay on coarse woolens thirty-five per cent. If this is not protection, I can not understand it. Therefore, the tariff was only the pretext, and disunion and a Southern confederacy the real object. *The next pretext will be the negro or the slavery question.*"

Jackson retired from the presidency at the age of seventy years. He had hardly passed an hour, and it is said, never a day without experiencing the most intense pain from either his wounds or his various diseases. He was also, in his own estimation, greatly reduced in finances, although he possessed a beautiful mansion at the Hermitage and one of the most productive farms in the entire South.

In a letter to a friend, he says: "I returned home, with just ninety dollars in money, having expended all my salary, and most of the proceeds of my cotton crop; found everything out of repair; corn, and everything else for the use of my farm, to buy; having but one tract of land besides my homestead, which I have sold, and which has enabled me to begin the new year (1838) clear of debt, relying on our industry and economy to yield

us a support, trusting to a kind Providence for good seasons and a prosperous crop."

He spent his time in the repair and improvement of his farm and in carrying on a stubborn battle with his weakened and worn physical self. It was six years before he came, at last, to the rest and relief from pain which he had so well earned.

He died on Sunday morning, June 8, 1845, a warm, bright day. Dr. Esselman had remained at the Hermitage all night and states that as soon as he saw General Jackson on the morning of that day, he knew that the hand of death was upon him. He immediately ordered Jackson to bed. In getting back into bed, he fainted. The servants thought he had passed away and commenced to sob and cry out in a loud manner. Jackson soon roused himself, however, and said: "My dear children, do not grieve for me; it is true, I am going to leave you; I am well aware of my situation; I have suffered much bodily pain, but my sufferings are but as nothing compared with that which our blessed Saviour endured upon that accursed cross, that we might all be saved who put our trust in him." He then bade various members of his household and family a farewell, ending with: "My dear children, and friends, and servants, I hope and trust to meet you all in heaven, both white and black."

A little later, hearing the negroes sobbing, he

asked: "What is the matter with my dear children? Have I alarmed you? Oh, do not cry. Be good children and we will all meet in heaven." These words were his last.

Two days later he was buried in the garden by the side of his wife, of whom he said a short time before his death: "Heaven will be no heaven if I do not meet my wife there."

When I visited the Hermitage and stood before the grave of this restless and turbulent man, I read this simple inscription: "General Andrew Jackson, Born on the 15th of March, 1767, Died on the 8th of June, 1845." While over the grave of his beloved Rachel, carved in imperishable marble, still breathes the love of this man for her, in these moving words:

"Here lie the remains of Mrs. Rachel Jackson, wife of President Jackson, who died the 22nd of December, 1828. Age 61 years. Her face was fair, her person pleasing, her temper amiable, her heart kind; she delighted in relieving the wants of her fellow creatures, and cultivated that divine pleasure by the most liberal and unpretending methods; to the poor she was a benefactor; to the rich an example; to the wretched a comforter; to the prosperous an ornament; her piety went hand in hand with her benevolence, and she thanked her Creator for being permitted to do good. A being so gentle and so virtuous slander might wound,

but could not dishonor. Even Death, when he bore her from the arms of her husband, could but transport her to the bosom of her God."

And there side by side, under a marble canopy, they rest at last in the eternal embrace of death. And in the hickory trees which shade the grave, and which were planted by Jackson's own hand in his last years, I thought I saw a sign. Two of these trees have grown together at the base. Let us hope that this marks their own love — that they, too, are now as one.

COMPARISON OF GEORGE WASHINGTON AND
ANDREW JACKSON

At first thought, we are likely to be struck by the close similarity in the antecedents and the careers of Washington and Jackson. Probably no two men in history ever came nearer repeating in every particular and every experience what these men did.

Both were born from immigrant parents on the frontier. The one was of English descent, and the other of Scotch-Irish. Both grew up in the woods and early exhibited an unusual energy. Both were, in their youth, impulsive and great lovers of sports.

In the main points of their careers there was a noticeable duplication of events. One was the chief hero of the Revolutionary War; the other the chief hero of the next war, again a war with England, that of 1812. Both served eight years in the White House—both experienced eight turbulent years—and both retired to their farms to live their last years in peace. The one, we have seen, came on the stage just as the other was leaving it.

But there is, nevertheless, a vast contrast in their lives. Starting out as they did so nearly alike and touching so many common prizes as they went

Washington's great grand father

through life, observe the vast differences in their characters.

The first great contrast comes in their physical natures. Washington was a superb specimen, well over six feet and wonderfully formed. Aside from a short illness in the French and Indian War he was not troubled by disease until his death. He was a stranger to the kind of pain that racked and wasted Jackson almost his entire life. Jackson was a trifle over six feet high, too, but of extreme slenderness and not so splendidly formed.

The next contrast is in mental viewpoint. Washington set about early in life to overcome and eradicate his impetuosity, to curb his temper and to adopt rules of conduct that would make him more pleasing to those with whom he came in contact. Jackson, on the other hand, seems to have grown more quarrelsome and violent as he grew older and his physical pain increased. We find no desire on his part to master his faults and shortcomings. Indeed, there is a sort of glory in them, a sort of pressing them on at times as if to give them greater emphasis to the country at large.

Washington was ever the mathematician; Jackson, the horse-racing, loud-swearing, duelling lawyer of the rough frontier. He was, in the language of the West, *quick on the trigger*. There is none of the mathematician in this sort of a man;

Washington built
 to control time and
 -has this.

he is impulsive, quick to action and not to be denied once he moves. One of his favorite maxims illustrates the point, "When you have a thing to do, take all the time for thinking that the circumstances will allow, but when the time has come for action, stop thinking." This was evidently paraphrased from Napoleon: "Shoot first, think afterward." And it is curiously true that this kind of a nature seldom has time for cold, deliberate thought. It is usually up to the hilt in action all the time. It lives and thrives on instinct and will.

Washington was slow and deliberate in his campaigns, his eye ever on the "glorious cause," burying his own inclination to fight it out once for all in one grand contest; his battles were carefully planned and he was slow to adjust himself once they were disarranged. He was unable to do so, except in retreat and then another careful planning. Jackson seems to have done anything else but plan. Word is brought him that the British have landed nine miles below New Orleans. It is now growing dark. "By the Eternal, they cannot sleep on our soil!" he exclaims, and moves his men out to attack in the darkness. Again, in the Creek campaign, he learns that he has less than one day's rations for his men and that the commissary has failed to meet him at the rendezvous. He was a day's march from supplies and more than a day's march to the besieged fort he was coming to

relieve. He decides to relieve the fort, destroy the Indians and take a chance on getting back to the other post before the Indians attack it. No Washington would ever have hazarded such an exploit; again it smacks more of Napoleon.

Washington was a soldier trained from his young manhood; Jackson had had no military training whatever, except to be wounded by a British officer when a youth for refusing to clean his boots, at the time his political influence gave him the major-generalship of the Tennessee militia. Jackson only spent a total of two years in active military duty, whereas Washington spent nearly eight years in the Revolution alone in the field. On the offense, Jackson never fought any antagonists save Indians, and his two great battles, at Mobile and New Orleans, were purely defensive. Washington was called upon to exhibit almost every kind of tactics in his various campaigns. Washington won his great victory at Yorktown with trained troops; Jackson, with raw levies, administered the most withering defeat British arms ever sustained on this continent and this against trained troops lately come from victories in southern France and Spain.

Another contrast is seen in their demeanor to their fellow men. Washington was kindly, patient and forbearing. It is said that he never fought a duel in his life. We know that he did not indulge

in quarreling with those with whom he associated. Jackson, on the other hand, was continually in the midst of passionate turmoil from the time he had his quarrel with Governor Sevier. Almost the last public act of his long life was that wherein, at last, he forgave all his enemies. Washington suffered as much defamation in his administration as Jackson did, but he seems never to have had any enemies to forgive, so far as he was personally concerned.

Both married other men's wives. Washington, the Widow Custis, his own age and the wealthiest woman in Virginia. Jackson took, within three years after meeting her, Rachel Robards, the wife of a man not very high in the social scale at the time. It is said that he was none too scrupulous as to the manner in which he deprived Robards of his wife. There is no doubt, however, of the great love that existed between them.

Both died without issue of their bodies; both adopted children and found much solace, in their old age, in the little grandchildren. Both apparently were strong family men and passionately fond of country life. Neither, however, ever hesitated to leave his own fireside to engage in public service.

Jackson is the more common of the two because his virtues were the very weaknesses of the many. His amazing will power is at once the most re-

markable and the most pleasing trait in his whole character. Even in it he lacked balance and a fine sense of humor. It was just as likely to drive him into an unprofitable quarrel as it was into a great service. He lived thick and got into his own way a good deal of the time.

Washington, from the standpoint of pure analysis, is the higher and better character of the two, because he put down rebellion in his own nature. He proved that he who subdues his own self is the mightiest character and will triumph in the end over all his foes. Some of Washington's enemies live today merely for the things they attempted to do to him; whereas Jackson's quarrels will serve to divide posterity into two camps as long as his name is remembered.

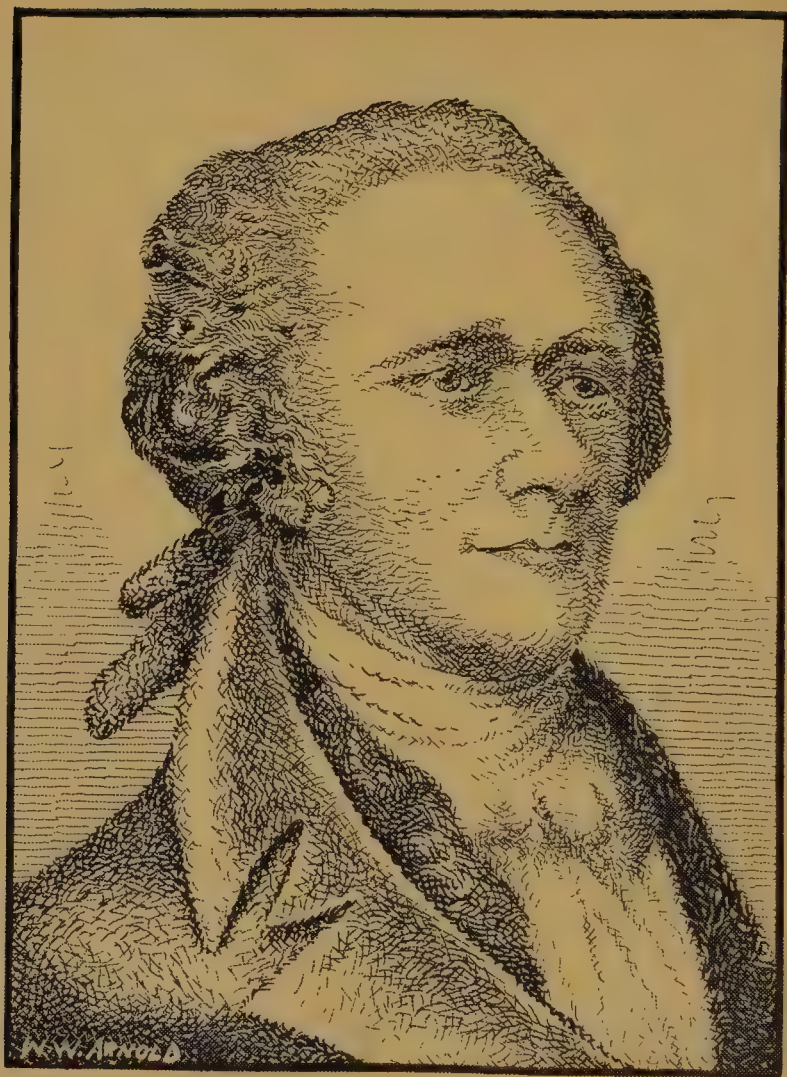
Out of it all we come to see, in the end, that both men were needed, and the necessary man, whatever his faults, is always applauded.

CHAPTER III

Statesmen

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

JAMES MADISON



ALEXANDER HAMILTON

He was truly an eagle and undoubtedly the superior of his contemporaries in every department of talent and native ability.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

IN native ability he was doubtless the peer of any man this country has yet discovered.

While still a mere youth he sprang full-armed upon the national stage and he justified that early promise until the day of his death. He was indeed a giant in the days when the shifting political contest brought to the front a whole galaxy of giants.

Some men, indeed most men, are slow to catch their stride. They unfold with great deliberation, and sometimes are even surprised themselves when a fortuitous circumstance discovers to them their own powers. Others may be conscious of their ability early in life but are forced to serve many an apprenticeship before their opportunity comes.

There are others, not many in all history, and Hamilton was one of them, who seem from the very hour that they enter this life to be the darlings of Fate. They come at the correct hour and they come equipped with an amazing experience and judgment which gives the lie to their years. They move unerringly to their proper place and assume their leadership by a sort of divine right which never ceases to puzzle and charm.

It is futile to seek the explanation in their ancestry and background, although these do help a bit. But there is something, some quality inherent in

them, which cannot be so easily explained. It seems, rather, that all the choice distillation of dozens of generations of experience has been combined in them and that a jesting Fate has turned them loose upon an unsuspecting world to see what will happen.

Hamilton was the son of an obscure Scotch merchant living on the island of Nevis, in the West Indies, and Rachel Fawcett Levine, the wife of a rich Danish Jew, who treated her so cruelly that she was forced to leave him shortly after her marriage at the age of sixteen. She was a brilliant and highly educated girl for the times and seems to have made the most of her advantages. She had a son by Levine, who was taken away from her by that man when they separated. It was some years before she met James Hamilton, who was an attractive man with much charm of manner and person.

She naturally fell in love with him and they soon set up housekeeping together. There has been much idle gossip concerning this affair and sordid stories have been repeated concerning Hamilton's illegitimate origin. There seems to be no basis for the inevitable inference to be drawn from these tales. Hamilton was not the result of a promiscuous attachment. His father and mother were sincerely attached to each other

and continued to live together until the latter's death at the age of thirty-two.

We do not know for certain whether Rachel Levine really attempted to secure her freedom before going to Hamilton's house. She had been forced into her alliance with Levine, much older than herself, against her will. He was rich and powerful, with great influence. Life had dealt her a hard blow; perhaps she did not care. Here was love, kindness, protection. Whatever her motives, they were natural.

The best test of it was Hamilton himself. He was a love-child and he came endowed with all the marked differences so often seen in such cases. His half-brother Levine, born of the same mother but under different circumstances seems to have been an ordinary barnyard fowl. In 1782, Hamilton wrote to his wife concerning him, as follows: "He tells me of the death of my brother Levine. You know the circumstances that abate my distress, yet my heart acknowledges the rights of a brother. . . ."

Hamilton was born one year after Rachel Levine went to James Hamilton's house to live. Levine then divorced her, and the records of the Ember Court of St. Croix show that "John Michael Levine was granted a divorce for *abandonment*, and Levine was permitted to marry again; but she, being the defendant, was not."

Levine was not content with this but attempted to secure a few slaves which she owned and left at her death to her sons, Alexander and James, "in behalf of her lawfully begotten heir, Peter Levine."

Alexander Hamilton made no effort during his lifetime to conceal his origin. He certainly made it known to his wife, as is indicated by the letter from which we have quoted. It was likewise known to her father, General Schuyler, and to General Washington, both of whom accepted him. This indicates that no prejudices were current then.

He very early gave promise of the great career that was before him. His mother died when he was about eleven years of age, and before he was twelve he went to work in a "counting room." His father had suffered losses in business which rendered this step necessary.

Before he was thirteen years old, he wrote a letter to his friend Edward Stevens, which is remarkable for the capacity of observation and sound reasoning it displays: "I condemn the groveling condition of a clerk, or the like to which my fortune condemns me, and would willingly risk my life, though not my character, to exalt my station. I am confident, Ned, that my youth excludes me from any hopes of immediate preferment, nor do I desire it; but I mean to prepare the way for

futurity." Then, he fervently wishes there was "a war."

At about this time, we find his employer leaving on a long trip and placing the thirteen-year-old boy in complete charge of the business during his absence!

During his clerkship, Hamilton found much time for reading and study. We are told that his favorite authors were Plutarch and Pope. Doubtless, from the latter he drew his style and mode of expression, and from the former his profound knowledge of history and his knowledge of governments.

His ability with the pen won him, before his fifteenth birthday, considerable local prominence due to his description of a local hurricane. It gave evidence of so much ability that wealthy friends and relatives decided that such talent should be prepared for greater things. A purse was raised and he was sent to the American Colonies to pursue his education.

He eventually reached New York and upon the advice of some clergymen attended a famous grammar school at Elizabethtown, New Jersey. His progress was so great that at the end of a year he was ready for college. During the year, he not only waded through his studies with great leaps and bounds, but he wrote a great deal—

prose and poetry, including elegies, verse and hymns.

His desire to get through college as fast as his abilities would permit prevented him attending Princeton, where the rules prohibited such a course. He then went to New York and entered what has since become Columbia University. And, again, he was the darling of Fate, for his attendance there is what put him in the way of his subsequent career.

The gathering storm of the Revolution was already upon the horizon, and while Hamilton pursued his studies he was, nevertheless, giving a great deal of thought to the impending conflict. We know that he spent a long time deciding which side of the controversy he should support. He was ever an exponent of strong government, law, order and discipline. His sympathies naturally inclined on the side of government rather than of revolution. He admits, himself, that he held "strong prejudices on the ministerial side until he became convinced by the superior force of the arguments in favor of the colonial claims." He even made a speech and did a lot of talking in his student group in support of "the ministerial side."

It is asserted that at this point his burning ambition decided the issue for him. To support the ministerial government offered little of promise in

the way of preferment in the future. But revolution meant change and change meant new leaders, new opportunities, new fortunes. Whatever was the controlling motive, he changed sides and from that hour was an ardent patriot.

New York was rather slow in arousing herself and in taking an active part with the other colonies. At last, a meeting was called in what is now City Hall Park for the purpose of prodding the Assembly into action. A great crowd gathered and the chosen orators moved with great caution and care. Alexander Hamilton, then but seventeen years of age, was in the crowd.

The evident fear of the appointed orators apparently greatly aroused his fighting blood and he made his way to the platform, leaped boldly before the people and launched forth into a burning speech that electrified the crowd. His youth was forgotten in the eloquence and logic of that address and he became at once one of the leading Revolutionary figures in the colony.

He followed up his advantage with several political pamphlets which served to strengthen his reputation and to extend his influence. At the same time, he organized a corps of students into an artillery company and regularly drilled them. Wanting ordnance, they took the guns mounted at the Battery and withdrew them to the college

campus, under fire from the enemy ship *Asia* then anchored in the harbor.

His eagerly coveted "war" had come and he was not the man to be caught asleep when such a glorious opportunity presented itself. Indeed, that announced intention in his boyhood letter to his friend to "prepare the way for futurity" was one of the marked characteristics of his life. He was always ready to take advantage of the opportunities that came to him. That may be said to be one of the real distinguishing characteristics between great, and inferior, men.

The artillery company received its first fire at the Battle of Long Island, which the patriots lost. Hamilton's first military exploit was in covering the retreat. It is said that General Washington stood at the top of the ferry steps anxiously waiting for the last man to embark from the island. The last man was Alexander Hamilton. He had been introduced a short time before to the Commander-in-Chief by General Greene, who had been struck by the superior discipline of the young captain's company.

Hamilton was present during the retreat up Manhattan, later across New Jersey, and the battles at Trenton and Princeton. It is said that at the latter place, he took a spite shot at the college because he still remembered the refusal of the college authorities to admit him. Trevelyan

states: “. . . for later young Alexander Hamilton at the battle of Princeton, with the irreverence of a student fresh from a rival place of education, planted his guns on the sacred green of the academical campus, and fired a six-pound shot, which is said to have passed through the head of King George the Second's portrait in the chapel.” The fact cannot be disputed, but the motive doubtless can.

His service was excellent, if not brilliant. When the army went into winter quarters at Morristown, the young commander was offered the position of aide-de-camp to the Commander-in-Chief with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. Hamilton, with that remarkable self-confidence so noticeable in one so young, really felt that he was making a great sacrifice in taking the position, where he would be removed from the line and out of actual command in battle. He seemed to think that with his ability, no position was beyond reach if he remained in the line. But his choice to join his Chief's military family was one of the wisest decisions he ever made. It brought him closely under the eye of Washington and put him in a position where he met the greatest men of the times and had an opportunity to win their esteem and confidence. It stood him in good stead all the rest of his days.

His duties as aide-de-camp placed him in charge

of Washington's correspondence. To his Chief's "yes" or "no" he brought to bear all of his remarkable gift of expression, his correct reasoning powers and his consummate tact. This correspondence was exceedingly large, and as energetic and ambitious as Hamilton was, he had plenty to occupy his time and talents.

The greatest service he rendered his Chief, no doubt, was when he was sent by Washington to Gates to secure reinforcements for the main army. Gates had been terribly puffed up over the victory which Arnold and his other generals had won for him at Saratoga (while he remained in his tent), and he was dallying with the fond dream of taking Washington's position. His praises were being sung by all whereas Washington was being criticised for doing nothing.

Washington had requested troops from Gates. The latter ignored the request. In his extremity, the great chieftain turned to the one man in whom he could place his confidence (how often he was to do this in the years to come!), and sent Colonel Hamilton to the vain Gates to use his good offices in persuading the latter to part with a portion of his army. In case persuasion failed, the young Colonel carried in his pocket a curt order commanding Gates to deliver up the troops. It was a ticklish situation for the Commander-in-Chief. To compel Gates to obey, was adding fuel to the

flames that already threatened him and made it look as though the former were trying to strip the latter of his army through spite. Hamilton, through his wonderful tact came back with the troops and the seal unbroken on the order.

A short time before the end of the war, Hamilton kept the Commander-in-Chief waiting one day. The latter gently chided him for it. The haughty pride of the young Colonel caused him to curtly reply, "Since you think it, sir, we part!" Much has been made of this so-called quarrel. There is no evidence whatever of any feeling on the part of Washington, nor does any appear at a later date on the part of Hamilton. Washington certainly was within his right in reprimanding a tardy aide. We have reason to believe that he regretted it later because he made overtures to Hamilton, which the latter wrongfully spurned. But Washington overlooked the hot-blooded conduct of Hamilton, placed him in the field again and gave him his chance to distinguish himself at Yorktown. There he was permitted to lead the assault, and he won a brilliant name for himself by taking the position assigned to him within ten minutes.

In the meantime, while on his trip north to negotiate with Gates, he had met Miss Elizabeth Schuyler. The acquaintanceship rapidly ripened into love and he threw himself into his love-making with the despatch and energy which charac-

terized all of his activities. Most of the courtship was by correspondence due to his military duties.

One of these letters in which he ardently pours out his heart, shows how talented he was in the sweet nothings so important at this period. Most of his letters, however, were full of the happenings of the day and accounts of momentous events which he had witnessed. The love letter follows:

I have told you and I told you truly that I love you too much. You engross my thoughts too entirely to allow me to think of anything else. You not only employ my mind all day, but you intrude on my sleep. I meet you in every dream and when I awake I cannot close my eyes again for ruminating on your sweetness. 'Tis a pretty story indeed that I am to be thus monopolized by a little *nut brown maid* like you and from a soldier metamorphosed into a puny lover. I believe in my soul you are an enchantress; but I have tried in vain, if not to break, at least to weaken the charm and you maintain your empire in spite of all my efforts and after every new one I make to draw myself from my allegiance, my partial heart still returns and clings to you with increased attachment. To drop figures my lovely girl, you become dearer to me every moment. . . . Indeed, my dear Betsey, you do not write me often enough. I ought at least to hear from you by every post, and your last letter is as old as the middle of September. I have written you twice since my return from Hartford. You will laugh at me for consulting you about such a trifle, but I want to know whether

you would prefer my receiving the nuptial benediction in my uniform or in a different habit. It will be just as you please, so consult your whim and what you think most consistent with propriety. . . .”

They were married at Albany in December, 1780. The wedding was a brilliant affair attended by several members of Washington’s “family.” Thereafter, throughout their lives, there is a fine current of sentiment running through their letters, and a tenderness bespeaking the depth of the attachment between them. On September 6, 1781, his homesickness for his wife causes him to say: “Yesterday, my lovely wife, I wrote to you, inclosing you a letter in one to your father, to the care of Mr. Morris. . . . Every day confirms me in the intention of renouncing public life, and devoting myself wholly to you. Let others waste their time and their tranquility in a vain pursuit of power and glory; be it my object to be happy in a quiet retreat with my better angel.”

As soon as the war was over, he hurried home and immediately plunged into the study of the law. His labors were soon interrupted by his election to Congress by the legislature. About this time, his friend James McHenry wrote him some sensible advice, which Hamilton did not heed:

“I hear you are chosen a delegate to Congress. Will you forgive me for saying that I would rather

have heard that you had not been chosen. If you accept of the office, there is a stop to any further study of the law, which I am desirous you should finish, because a few years practice at the bar would make you independent, and do you more substantial good than all the fugitive honors of Congress. This would put it in your power to obtain them and to hold them with more certainty, should you still be inclined to risque in a troubled sea. The moment you cease to be a candidate for public places, the people will lament your loss and wait with impatience till they can persuade a man of your abilities to serve them. In the meantime, you will be doing justice to your family. Besides, you know that there is nothing at present to be had worthy of your acceptance. . . . How would it vex me to learn that you had exclaimed in the stile of an English cardinal—If I had best served my family as faithfully as I have the public, my affairs would have been today in a very different order.”

Although he did not follow the advice of his friend, he was beginning this early in his career to speculate on the ways of ambition and to admit, at times, that private life offered more satisfaction. He wrote to Lafayette, before taking his seat in Congress: “I am going to throw away a few months more in public life, and then retire a simple citizen and good *paterfamilias*. I set out for Philadelphia in a few days. You see the disposition I am in. You are condemned to run the

race of ambition all your life. I am already tired of the career, and dare to leave it.”

Congress had lost most of the men who had given it such renown in the early days of the Revolution. It was now in its dotage and a more weak and helpless legislative body probably never assembled before. The powers which had formerly been granted to it by common consent when the country was in great peril had all been withdrawn by jealous, narrow, contentious States, quarreling among themselves now that freedom had been won.

Hamilton exerted himself to the utmost to arouse the members and the country to the need for a better form of government, but to no avail. He took his seat in November, 1782, and it was not until May, 1787, that a convention of the States assembled in Philadelphia for the purpose of discussing the subject.

The interval of five years was by no means an idle one. He engaged in the practice of law and constantly agitated a stronger government to save the country from anarchy. Several attempts were made to bring the States together, but they failed. Finally, Virginia issued a call for a convention at Annapolis but the proposal failed for want of a quorum. Hamilton here issued an address to the people setting forth the needs of the hour and urging another convention to be attended by all.

He was to find opposition at home, however. Governor Clinton was bitterly opposed to a strong central government and since he controlled the legislature, the struggle seemed hopeless. But this was just the sort of opposition where Hamilton shone at his best. He secured his own election to the legislature and he went to the mat with the states-party. While bested in the main point, he did succeed in getting an act appointing three delegates to the Constitutional Convention, himself among the number. His two colleagues were adherents of Governor Clinton.

It was at the Constitutional Convention that the genius of Hamilton first manifested itself in all its splendor. Naturally quick, fiery and an eager participant in forensic endeavor, he showed his shrewd political acuteness and good sense by keeping out of the thick of the debate, and never gave his colleagues a chance to destroy his influence before the Convention by showing that he did not represent the majority opinion of his State. During all those momentous weeks Hamilton spoke but once and that early in the session just after the various plans of government had been submitted, among them his own. This speech, however, of five hours' duration, produced a profound effect upon the Convention for it demonstrated that he was absolutely master of his subject and one of the first minds of the nation, de-

spite his youth. He was then but thirty years of age.

His great service at the Convention was in committees and in private council with the members. He kept himself sufficiently outside the center of the stage so that his position was materially strengthened when he came to carry the fight for adoption to his State.

That he was ambitious cannot be denied. That he even expected to be Chief Executive of the embryo nation is not improbable. Indeed, it seems that he took care to see to it that no hindrance to this end was written into the organic law of the land.

Some students of Constitutional Law have often wondered why it was that the Constitution, in setting out the qualifications of the president, should read: "No person except a natural-born citizen, *or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution*, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, *and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.*"

There was great prejudice, following the War, against aliens and a clamor had been set up that no foreign-born person should ever be eligible to the office of President. This sentiment seemed sure to carry when Hamilton hurried to Madison

and urged upon him the point that soldiers in the Revolution certainly should not be cut off from eligibility. The point appealed to Madison and his draft of the section embodied Hamilton's idea on the point.

Hamilton was, of course, foreign-born. Just why the time limit for eligibility of foreign-born citizens was placed precisely at fourteen years is not known, but it is interesting to note that Hamilton had been in the country *just fourteen years!* The section seems, on this conjecture, to have been framed more especially for him than for any other person in the country at the time! Yet it is doubtful whether Madison would have deliberately framed it to aid Hamilton; the chances are that he innocently accepted some of Hamilton's suggestions.

His sagacity was by no means limited to selfish proposals. Seven years before, while a soldier in the Revolution and only twenty-three years of age, he was preparing himself for the very struggle that was before the country. He said, in a letter to Duane, a member of Congress:

“Some of the lines of the army, but for the influence of Washington, would obey their States in opposition to Congress—Congress should have complete sovereignty in all that relates to war, peace, trade, finance, foreign affairs, armies, fleets, fortifications, coining money, establishing banks,

imposing land tax, poll tax, duties on trade, and the unoccupied lands. . . . The idea of an uncontrollable sovereignty in each State will defeat the powers of Congress and make our Union feeble and precarious.”

Probably no greater testimonial of the unusual mental powers of Hamilton can be given than the amazing grasp of sound government exhibited above. When we consider that it came from a mere youth, it is all the more remarkable. And the last sentence shows his rare foresight at its best; even then, long years before the issue was seriously drawn, he had thought out and decided in his own mind, the fallacy of the states-right doctrine.

There has been much criticism of the form of government which Hamilton desired to establish, and his scheme laid the foundation for the aristocratic charges which were later lodged against him, particularly his desire to pattern closely after the British form of government. It seems, however, that he was merely a good bargainer and in overstating his case, he got a better form of government than might otherwise have been obtained. Many years later, he wrote :

“I may truly say that I never proposed either a President or Senate for life; and that I neither recommended nor meditated the annihilation of the State governments.

“And I may add that, in a course of the discussions in the Convention, neither the propositions thrown out for debate, nor even those who voted in the earlier stages of deliberation, were considered as evidence of a definite opinion in the proposer or voter.

“It appeared to be in some sort understood that, with a view to free investigation, experimental propositions might be made, which were to be received merely as suggestions for consideration. Accordingly, it is a fact that *my final opinion was against an executive during good behavior*, on account of the increased danger to the public tranquility incident to the election of a magistrate to his degree of permanency.

“In a plan of a Constitution which I drew up while the Convention was sitting, and which I communicated to Mr. Madison about the close of it, perhaps a day or two after, the office of President has no longer duration than for three years.”
—From a letter to Timothy Pickering, September 16, 1803.

He saw that the vital question which would decide the success of the new form of government, was the proper division of authority between the national and the state governments. With his usual foresight, he demanded that to whatever government the jurisdiction was given, the full power to enforce should also lodge. He said: “If the circumstances of our country are such as to demand a compound, instead of a simple—a confederate,

instead of a sole government, the essential point which will remain to be adjusted, will be to discriminate the objects, as far as it can be done, which will appertain to the different provinces or departments of power; allowing to each the most ample authority for fulfilling those which may be committed to its charge. . . . Not to confer in each case a degree of power commensurate to the end, would be to violate the most obvious rules of prudence and propriety, and improvidently to trust the great interests of the nation to hands which are disabled from managing them with vigor and success."

His greatest public service in regard to the new Constitution, however, came in the fight for adoption which he chiefly waged in New York. In anticipation of that struggle, he commenced to write out expositions of the document under the pen-name "Publius." These appeared with amazing rapidity, averaging one every three days. Madison, and to some extent, Jay, joined in the fray, adding papers all of which were accumulated into the "Federalist" papers which have remained the foremost exposition of the Constitution outside of judicial interpretation in existence.

Of these papers, Hamilton was the author of more than half and their clearness, their invincible logic and commonsense did more to win the cause than anything else. They have been credited by all

authorities as having won the contest, at once bitter and doubtful.

The actual struggle in New York was against overwhelming odds. The Clinton party was determined to resist the adoption to the last ditch. It secured the election of forty-six out of the sixty-five votes in the convention. Clinton, himself, was chosen president and the majority was led by Melancton Smith, no mean debater and a man of great ability. Yates and Lansing who had been Hamilton's colleagues at Philadelphia were also pitted against him. Hamilton headed the minority of nineteen and was assisted by Jay and Livingston. He, himself, said: "Two-thirds of the convention and four-sevenths of the people are against us."

But Hamilton was the last man in the State to shrink from the contest. Ever bold and fearless, his aggressive nature no doubt joyed at the prospect of battle. The Clinton party shrewdly chose to make the first test of strength on postponement. They urged that it would be better to wait and see how the new government operated before casting lots with it. Hamilton accepted the gauge of battle and when the vote came even the overwhelming majority against him was afraid to accept responsibility for deciding the momentous question by evasion.

The real struggle began. It was a contest sen-

tence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph. It descended into the depths of personalities and everything he had said was distorted and used against him. He was on his feet constantly defending his position, waging the battle for the Constitution. He let no detail escape, and being thoroughly master of his subject, knowing every argument that had been urged on both sides, he met the hostile convention single-handed without fear or delay. His work began to tell. The convention finally paused and remained several days in a state of inaction, his adversaries, in spite of their majority, fearing to bring the issue to vote. Before their issue came, news arrived that nine States had ratified; this meant that the new government would be launched. Then came news that Virginia had also assented. Again adjournment was attempted and defeated by the vigilant Hamilton.

Then the Clinton party attempted to amend the Constitution and offered a proposal for conditional ratification. Hamilton met this with a masterful speech so that even Smith said that conditional ratification was absurd. A little later Smith admitted that Hamilton had convinced him and that he would vote for the Constitution! This produced the break and it was ratified by a majority of three votes.

Although Hamilton was but thirty years of age,

he had already won one of the greatest triumphs ever recorded in history, and was certainly the foremost parliamentary orator of his time. For he won what no other orator in the country did, and against greater odds. Even in Virginia, compromises had to be effected to bring that State in line.

Chancellor Kent, who was an intimate friend of Hamilton, leaves this statement as to his ability as a speaker: "Hamilton generally spoke with great earnestness and energy, and with considerable and sometimes vehement gesture. His language was clear, nervous and classical. He went to the foundation and reason of every doctrine which he examined, and he brought to the debate a mind richly endowed with all the learning that was applicable."

Justice Ambrose Spencer has said of him: "Alexander Hamilton was the greatest man this country ever produced. I knew him well. I was in situations often to observe and study him. I saw him at the bar and at home. He argued cases before me while I sat as judge on the bench. Webster has done the same. In power of reasoning, Hamilton was the equal of Webster; and more than this can be said of no man. In creative power Hamilton was infinitely Webster's superior."

In person he was pleasing. His grandson, Allan

McLane Hamilton, says: "In reality he was fair and had reddish-brown hair, and a specimen before me proves this to have been the case. It has a certain glint which was probably more marked at an earlier period; but even now there is no difficulty in finding that it belonged to a person of the semi-blonde type. His eyes were a deep blue—almost violet—and he undoubtedly presented the physical appearance of his Scotch father rather than his French mother. His eyes were deep set, his nose long, and of the Roman type, and he had a good chin, the jaw being strong; the mouth firm and moderately large."

Schmucker describes him at thirty-eight when he resumed the practice of law in New York: "He was under the middle size, thin in person, and very erect, courtly and dignified in his bearing. His hair was combed back from his forehead, powdered and collected in a cue behind. His complexion was very delicate and fair, his cheeks rosy, and the whole expression pleasing and cheerful. His forehead was lofty, capacious and prominent.

"His appearance accorded well with the expectations which his prodigious fame excited. His voice was musical, his manner frank and impulsive. His ordinary dress was a blue coat with gilt buttons, a white silk waistcoat, black silk small clothes, and white silk stockings.

"His figure, though slight, was well propor-

tioned and graceful. His appearance and carriage betokened the possessor of a masterly intellect, and one fully conscious of his powers."

Shea says that "his political enemies frankly spoke of his manner and conversation, and regretted its irresistible charm."

That he had enemies goes without saying. A man of his talents and impulsive energy could not long engage in public life without them. Jefferson was his chief antagonist and not only feared Hamilton's policies, but cordially disliked him. Monroe one time challenged Hamilton to a duel, with Aaron Burr his second, but the affair was prevented by friends. Monroe industriously worked to accomplish Hamilton's personal ruin and circulated many stories reflecting upon his integrity. Later, he sought to make amends to Hamilton's widow, who spurned the offer. John Adams, with that admirable gift for hatred which he possessed, once referred to him as the "bastard brat of a Scotch pedlar!" We know that Adams' hatred for Hamilton wrecked his administration and prevented his re-election. It even brought Adams into a quarrel with Washington, when war threatened with France, and only an ultimatum from the illustrious chieftain secured an appointment to the army for Hamilton.

Jefferson once urged Madison to lock horns with Hamilton, saying Hamilton's articles in the

press promised "much mischief." "You know the ingenuity of his talents," he said, "and there is not a person but yourself who can foil him. For Heaven's sake then, take up your pen and do not desert the public cause altogether."

He was assailed by a constant pack of smaller fry, and the scurrilous press by which the country was too well served, singled him as their lawful prey. Hamilton smarted under these attacks, for he wrote, almost in bitterness: "Mine is an odd destiny, perhaps no man in the United States has sacrificed or done more for the present constitution than myself; and contrary to all my anticipations of its fate, as you know from the very beginning, I am still laboring to prop the frail and worthless fabric, yet I have the murmurs of its friends no less than the curses of its foes for my reward. What can I do better than withdraw from the scene? Every day proves to me more and more that this American world was not made for me. . . . The time may ere long arrive when the minds of men will be prepared to make an effort to recover the Constitution, but the many cannot now be brought to make a stand for its preservation. We must wait a while."

His career thus far, however, had not projected the full force of political hatred before the country. The Constitution had been adopted and the new government was taking its first uncertain

steps. The great Washington had been the unanimous choice for President, and he was gathering his advisers. The question uppermost in his mind was the financial question.

It was the most pressing question before the young Republic. The national credit was gone, an amazing debt confronted the country, and it seemed that only a wizard could bring order out of chaos. Washington turned to his old friend, Robert Morris, who had by his able financing saved the Revolution. But Morris declined.

Washington had asked him, in the event he could not serve, to suggest someone qualified to handle the situation. He was frankly surprised when Morris nominated Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton was then but thirty-two years of age and Washington had naturally expected to surround himself with more mature advisers. But he kept his promise to Morris, knowing full well the general ability of his former aide, and gave him the appointment.

Hamilton had, prior to this, with that amazing ability to foresee the future, been giving the financial situation a great deal of attention. He had been in correspondence with Morris on the subject and had proposed to him a national bank and had argued his plan with a great deal of ability. This had convinced Morris that he was the man for the place.

His greatest service to the country began now. For, without credit, without prosperity and a strong financial system, no constitution however ideal it might seem in theory could ever long survive. He had assisted in laying the framework—his greatest task was now to set the actual machinery in operation. And in doing it, he proved beyond the shadow of the doubt the great and many-sided ability he possessed.

Almost from the first he was brought into collision with Jefferson, who sat in the Cabinet as Secretary of State. That opposition seems to have grown out of Hamilton's impatience for delay, for his natural distrust of mob ignorance. He was of the nervous, impulsive, energetic type anxious to force things through. He had a program well thought out and he chafed under inaction. Being a strong exponent of law and order, he resented the French influence growing up in the country under Jefferson's inspiration. It was inevitable that the two men, so widely different in their political principles should clash. And in arraying themselves against each other, at the feet of their chief, they brought about the party system. And it is somewhat of a tribute to Hamilton's strength and native ability when we note that the party system came about because Jefferson found it necessary to organize a party against him, in order to defeat him!

But he confounded his enemies at every turn. He rapidly put in force the machinery for an adequate credit system. He insisted upon the payment of every dollar of every obligation of the Confederacy and the several states. Here he met opposition, but he carried it before him. Instantly, when this policy was decided, the credit of the young nation was restored almost completely.

He carried through his national bank proposal, amid a gathering storm of opposition. But Washington decided that issue, as he was forced to decide most of the issues through an equal division of the Cabinet.

Losing at the council table, his enemies resorted to personal abuse and underhanded methods. They assailed his personal integrity and insinuated that Hamilton was using the financial machinery to his own personal advantage. Again and again he was forced to appear before Congress to vindicate himself by showing the records. Finally, he was requested to present his reports in writing because his enemies contended that his personal qualities as an orator, stampeded that body and a calm decision was impossible!

He worked with tremendous energy and was forced to do a great deal more than would have been necessary had his enemies given him a chance to devote his entire attention to his work. That the foundation he laid in the Treasury Depart-

men was sound may be judged by the fact that the scope of the Department's work which he outlined, the divisions he made of it and the very forms in use are still being used!

He came to the Cabinet at a great personal sacrifice. His service in behalf of his country had been almost constant in some form or other from his student days. In the meantime he had acquired a family which was rapidly growing, and he had, as yet, made no provision for it. His salary in the Cabinet was but \$3,000 per annum, much below what he could command before the bar. Indeed, after he retired from public life he averaged better than \$12,000 per annum from his legal practice.

He remained in the Cabinet until he had silenced his enemies, until his important work had been accomplished, and then retired to New York. He was then thirty-eight years of age. He was looked upon as the real leader of the Federalist party, and everywhere the members of that party looked to him for guidance.

This greatly irked John Adams, who succeeded Washington. When he found the members of his Cabinet looking to Hamilton rather than to himself, he became exceedingly angry and in turn quarreled with every one of them. It is said that before his administration was over, he quarreled with every friend of Hamilton in public life.

The threatened war with France shows the depth of feeling on the part of Adams and his amazing genius for petty politics, even in the face of great national peril. Adams asked Washington to become again commander-in-chief of the army. This Washington was reluctant to assume, but finally agreed on condition that he should be permitted to name his own major-generals. Adams assented and Washington named Hamilton, Pinckney and Knox. Adams refused to indorse the venerable Chief's choice and insisted that Knox should be second in command.

Timothy Pickering, who was a member of Adams' Cabinet, in a letter to Hamilton's son in 1821, gives the following account of a conversation he had with Adams at this time:

"I forgot whether I did or did not mention to you and your mother, at my house, what passed between President Adams and me, in July, 1798, in relation to the command of the little army which Congress were then about authorizing to be raised.

"A. 'Whom shall we appoint Commander-in-Chief?'

"P. 'Colonel Hamilton.'

"On a subsequent day

"A. 'Whom shall we appoint Commander-in-Chief?'

"P. 'Colonel Hamilton.'

"On a third day

“A. ‘Whom shall we appoint Commander-in-Chief?’

“P. ‘Colonel Hamilton.’

“A. ‘O no! It is not his turn by a great deal. I would sooner appoint Gates, or Lincoln, or Morgan.’ ”

The result was that a bitter quarrel was caused and it was not stopped until Washington delivered an ultimatum to Adams in which he said that if his suggestions were not approved, he would resign. Washington played a trump card, but at the same time he gave a high testimonial to his opinion of Hamilton's military ability. It is a fact that Hamilton actually was in command and did the actual work in perfecting a plan for the military establishment.

Hamilton displayed the one mean act of his whole career in the campaign of 1800 when he brought out a pamphlet opposing Adams for reelection, and urging the Federalists to support himself. We have already seen that he was frankly ambitious, as most men were at that time. But he went to unnecessary lengths to repay Adams in kind. The fact that Adams deserved such treatment does not mitigate the act. Naturally, the effect of this was to cause Adams' defeat and the struggle between Jefferson and Burr.

This memorable contest had a great deal to do with the dispute between these two men which led

to Hamilton's death at the hands of Burr. It was Hamilton that decided the issue between them. He had known Burr for a long time, and he had from the start an instinctive distrust for him. They were both men of unusual talents and burning ambition; they were nearly the same size, each possessed unusual fascination of person. As lawyers, they were at the top of the New York bar and both enjoyed a handsome income, which they spent with a lavish hand. They were political opponents—Hamilton, a Federalist and Burr, a Republican.

Burr, descended from an illustrious line of New England ministers, was without a single moral scruple. He, too, had served for a time as Washington's aide-de-camp but had been dismissed by Washington when discovered in some "immoralities." He was without scruples in his affairs with women and pursued them all his life with singular abandon.

He had no political scruples as is amply evidenced by his attempt, when a defect in the election law tied him with Jefferson, to deprive that leader of his rightful place. It was only Hamilton's insistence that his Federalist friends in Congress support Jefferson that saved the country from seeing this master rogue seated in the White House.

He had no personal scruples. His determina-

tion to kill Hamilton and thus remove him from his path proves that. The deliberation with which he went about this purpose, his calmness and unconcern after it had been consummated, show that.

Hamilton was guilty of many of the same faults as Burr. He had his affairs with women, one of which he published to the country when he was threatened with exposure by his political enemies. He stooped, on one occasion at least, to suggest that an election might technically be diverted in order to save his party from defeat. But these lapses were not the real Hamilton, the usual Hamilton. On the whole, he was thoroughly honorable and imbued with a real sense of patriotism. Had he done nothing else but save the country from Burr, he would deserve our praise.

Burr's political power steadily waned during his service as Vice-President. He determined to recoup his fortunes by winning the Governorship of New York. Again he was frustrated by a mere scratch. When he cast about for a reason for his failure, he found that once more the shadow of Alexander Hamilton lay across his path. And so he cornered Hamilton and pressed the issue upon him by an appeal to the "code of honor."

Many students have wondered why it was that Hamilton consented to fight Burr, especially when it became known that he was opposed by principle

and nature to duelling and that he had determined, when they did meet, not to return Burr's fire.

The explanation seems to lie in a curious feeling which Hamilton had concerning the future of the country. He was frankly disappointed at the ascendancy of the Jeffersonian party and honestly thought that the country was rapidly drifting towards anarchy. It is hinted that he expected, as a result of the failure, that a monarchy would be set up.

He looked upon himself as the logical head of the army which would be raised by the supporters of law and order. If he failed to answer the challenge he would be looked upon as a coward and his enemies would prevent him occupying this position. So he went to his death.

The duel was postponed for a while because of Hamilton's engagements in court, but was finally set for July 11, 1804, on the heights of Weehawken, overlooking the Bay of New York. Hamilton kept his intention from his family, and went about his duties with his accustomed regularity.

One of his sons, then seven years of age, states that the night before the duel his father came home and stood for a moment in the door of his room looking at him with such attentiveness that he noticed the change in his countenance. Gone was all trace of preoccupation and he seemed to be so sincerely wrapt up in the boy that he never

forgot it. Hamilton then asked the boy to come and sleep with him that night, which he did. In the early morning, he took the boy's hands in his two hands and asked him to repeat his prayers, which was done. "More than seventy years have passed over my head since that morning," wrote his son, "and I have heard many prayers in the interval, but never have I forgotten my father's expression nor his words then."

Hamilton left the following letter to his wife:

"This letter, my very dear Eliza, will not be delivered to you unless I shall first have terminated my earthly career, to begin, as I humbly hope, from redeeming grace and divine mercy, a happy immortality.

"If it had been possible for me to have avoided the interview, my love for you and my precious children would have been alone a decisive motive. But it was not possible, without sacrifices which would have rendered me unworthy of your esteem. I need not tell you of the pangs I feel from the idea of quitting you, and exposing you to the anguish which I know you would feel. Nor could I dwell on the topic lest it should unman me.

"The consolations of Religion, my beloved, can alone support you; and these you have a right to enjoy. Fly to the bosom of your God and be comforted.

"With my last idea I shall cherish the sweet hope of meeting you in a better world.

"Adieu best of wives—best of women.

“Embrace all my darling children for me. Ever yours, A. H.”

In a later letter, he added: “The scruples of a Christian have determined me to expose my own life to any extent rather than subject myself to the guilt of taking the life of another. This much increases my hazards, and redoubles my pangs for you. But you had rather I should die innocent than live guilty.”

Burr was the first on the ground and it is said that when General Hamilton arrived, Burr and his second were busily engaged in clearing the spot of underbrush in order to give the necessary room. The details were soon arranged, and the men faced each other at a distance of ten paces.

William Coleman, who wrote an account of the affair for the *Evening Post*, says: “When Mr. Pendleton gave the word, Mr. Burr raised his arm slowly, deliberately took his aim, and fired. His ball entered General Hamilton’s right side. As soon as the bullet struck him, he raised himself involuntarily on his toes, turned a little to the left (at which moment his pistol went off), and fell upon his face.”

Dr. Hosack, who attended Hamilton, gives this account:

“He had at that instant just strength to say, ‘This is a mortal wound, Doctor,’ when he sunk

away, and became to all appearances lifeless. I immediately stripped up his clothes, and soon, alas! ascertained that the direction of the ball must have been through some vital part.

“His pulse was not to be felt; his respiration was entirely suspended; and upon laying my hand on his heart, and perceiving no motion there, I considered him as irrecoverably gone. I, however-observed to Mr. Pendleton, that the only chance for his reviving was immediately to get him upon the water. We therefore lifted him up, and carried him out of the wood, to the margin of the bank, where the bargeman aided us in conveying him into the boat, which immediately put off. . . . I now rubbed his face, lips and temples, with spirits of hartshorne, applied it to his neck and breast, and to the wrists and palms of his hands, and endeavored to pour some into his mouth. . . . He breathed; his eyes, hardly opened, wandered, without fixing on any objects; to our great joy he at length spoke: ‘My vision is indistinct,’ were his first words. . . .

“Soon after recovering his sight, he happened to cast his eye upon the case of pistols, and observing the one that he had had in his hand lying on the outside, he said: ‘Take care of that pistol; it is undischarged, and still cocked; it may go off and do harm; Pendleton knows (attempting to turn his head towards him) that I did not intend to fire at him.’ . . .

“Upon our reaching the house he became more languid, occasioned probably by the agitation of his removal from the boat. I gave him a little weak wine and water. When he recovered his feel-

ings, he complained of a pain in his back; we immediately undressed him, laid him in bed, and darkened the room. I then gave him a large anodyne, which I frequently repeated. . . . Yet were his sufferings, during the whole of the day, almost intolerable. I had not the shadow of a hope for his recovery. . . .

“During the night, he had some imperfect sleep; but the succeeding morning his symptoms were aggravated, attended however with a diminution of pain. His mind retained all of its usual strength and composure. The great source of his anxiety seemed to be his sympathy with his half-distracted wife and children. He spoke to her frequently of them. ‘My beloved wife and children’ were always his expressions. But his fortitude triumphed over his situation, dreadful as it was; once, indeed, at the sight of his children brought to the bedside together, seven in number, his utterance forsook him, he opened his eyes, gave them one look, and closed them again, until they were taken away. As a proof of his extraordinary composure of mind, let me add, that he alone could calm the frantic grief of their mother, ‘Remember, my Eliza, you are a Christian,’ were the expressions with which he frequently, with a firm voice, but in a pathetic and impressive manner, addressed her. His words, and the tone in which they were uttered, will never be effaced from my memory. At about two o’clock, as the public well know, he expired.”

Burr’s lack of moral scruples and his trickery are revealed in the fact that he was dressed in a

suit of silk that day, calculated to turn a bullet and therefore save his life in case Hamilton beat him to the trigger. It was not alone General Hamilton that he sent reeling into eternity that July morning; it was his own future, and all the promise his talents might have brought to him that were shot to pieces and tossed to the winds. From that hour he was to wander over the face of the earth, an outcast and an exile.

The passing of Hamilton aroused the country to the horror of duelling and while the custom did not pass entirely away, it caused the practice to be frowned upon. Henceforth, any politician who sought redress on the "field of honor" was courting political ruin.

Hamilton had his faults—most of them lodged in his impulsiveness—but he was a strong character, nevertheless, and possessed of a high sense of honor and patriotism. No better testimonial of it need be given than the manner in which he conducted himself in his last hours. He faced death as he had faced his political foes—calm, fearless and without delay. And in his manner of doing it, he sustained his principles to the best of his matchless ability . . . even to the giving of his life that none of them might be violated!

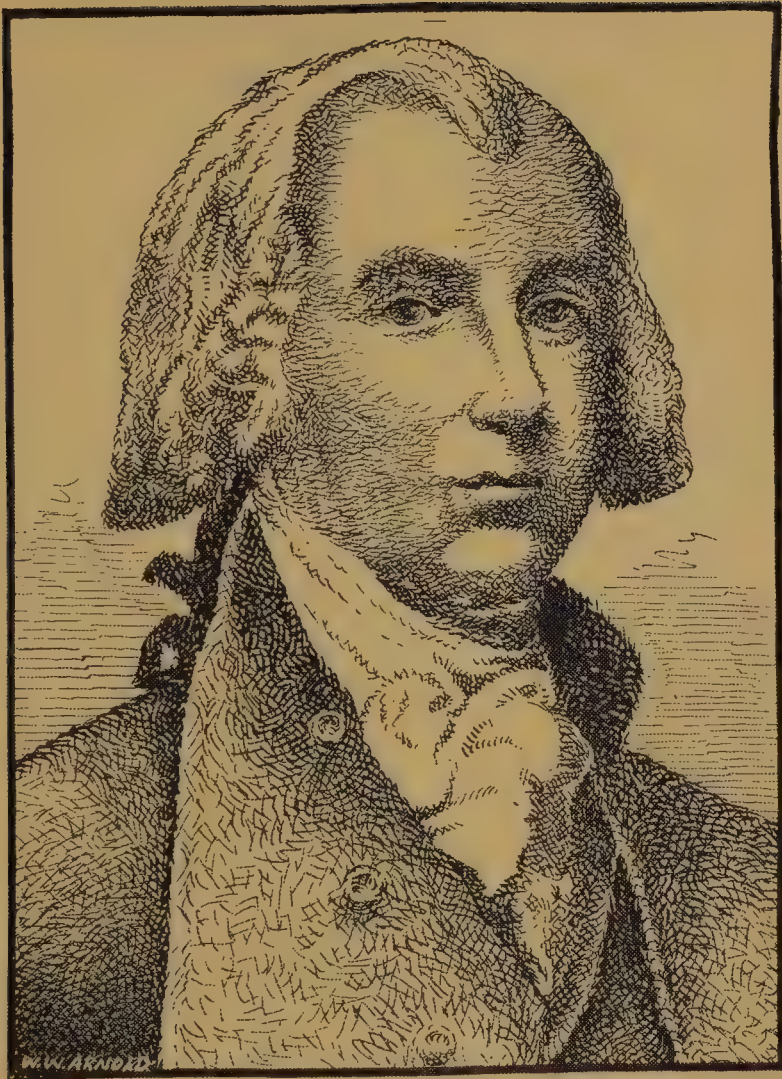
JAMES MADISON

We know the Madisons but we seldom understand them. They are lonely figures moving largely in their own orbits. No matter what they do for the mob in the way of unselfish service, they do not ever quite "belong." No hurraing partisans follow them about, applauding their acts. They seldom inspire men to risk anything to further their personal welfare.

They lack magnetism; they have none of the art for the theatrical and the spectacular; seldom, if ever, do they hear the cheers of the multitude in their ears. They labor in the cloistered silence of the study or in the privacy of the committee room. Of this small, select type of student-thinker James Madison was the patron saint.

He had none of the animal passions pinned on his coat-sleeve as did Clay or Jackson. He was just a student who thought things through, coolly and dispassionately. Before he descended to the depths of petty politics, he was an uncommonly clear thinker and he did a remarkable work; but the more the politician developed, the more stunted and dwarfed the statesman became.

He was not a splendid physical specimen like Washington or gifted with handsome features and charm of manner like Hamilton. James Madison



JAMES MADISON

He was too much an abstract thinker and student ever to excel in the practical world; from the moment he entered it, his star began to set and his career was done.

crept through life with a weak body, as men often do who are served by a strong mind. He was a born student, a confirmed note-taker. His work exhibits that attribute for genius, "the infinite capacity for taking pains," in the smallest details. He loved close distinctions of meanings and could split his hairs in parliamentary argument. In his own sphere, he stood invincible and without a peer, but when he got into other fields he was a pitiful misfit, hopelessly adrift!

James Madison was a Virginian, born at Port Conway, where his mother happened to be on a visit at the time. He was descended from Virginians, who, in his own words, were in "independent and comfortable circumstances." Madison seemed to have been without any great desire to probe into his ancestry; he traced it back to his great-grandfather and seemed content to let it rest there. He never talked much about himself or his antecedents and furnished just a bare list of his immediate ancestors to a historian who asked for it. The matter did not seem to interest him, and he could not remember whether a biography of himself had been published or not. Even Lincoln was curious enough about his family to try and discover if he were related to the Virginia Lincolns!

He seems to have grown up at Montpelier, the family estate. We know practically nothing of his boyhood. If he ever ran for the old swimming

hole, stripping his shirt as he ran, we do not know it. If he had military leanings and drilled the boys on the estate, it has escaped the historian's eye. The chances are that he did none of these boyhood things—his was the sheltered and colorless life of the student and the invalid.

In 1772, when he was twenty-one years of age, we find him writing to a friend a letter which reveals much of his mental and physical condition:

“I am too dull and infirm now to look out for extraordinary things in this world, for I think my sensations of many months have intimated to me not to expect a long or healthy life; though it may be better with me after some time; but I hardly dare expect it, and therefore have little spirit or elasticity to set about anything that is difficult in acquiring, and useless in possessing after one has exchanged time for eternity.”

There seems to be some ground for the assertion which has often been made that it was in his mind to prepare himself for the ministry. It is claimed that he spent his last year in Princeton acquiring Hebrew to this end. Certainly, after urging his friend to study history and morals during the winter, he adds: “I doubt not that you design to season them with a little divinity now and then, which, like the philosopher's stone in the hands of a good man, will turn them and every

lawful acquirement into the nature of itself, and make them more precious than fine gold."

Rives, who has done to Madison much the same that Weems has done to Washington, claims that the young student "explored the whole history and evidences of Christianity on every side, through clouds of witnesses and champions for and against, from the fathers and schoolmen down to the infidel philosophers of the eighteenth century." Gay rather lets all the wind out of this sweeping generality when he suggests that this is not only a remarkable flight for a youth of twenty-two to take, especially when it is kept in mind that he was at home then "in the house of an ordinary planter in Virginia" and that while such a library "so rich in theology as to admit of a study so exhaustive," was questionable, still "in Virginia history *nothing is impossible!*"

He was a close and careful student of the Bible and of a strong religious temperament. But when we keep in mind that his parents sent him to Princeton to acquire an education so that he could teach the other six children at home and thereby save the expense of sending them to college, the likelihood of a huge library on theology alone being at his command is doubtful.

If his studies in theology were to make a theologian of him, Fate played a prank on those who wished it. His investigations seem to have brought

him out at curious ends. They placed him in direct opposition to the established religious institutions of the day, and before many years, he was to help strike a blow in Virginia from which they never recovered. In 1774, when the political unrest was absorbing the attention of nearly everyone in the colonies, he wrote to William Bradford, Jr., of Philadelphia:

“But away with politics! . . . That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among some; and, to their eternal infamy, the clergy can furnish their quota of imps for such purposes. There are at this time in the adjacent country not less than five or six well-meaning men in close jail for publishing their religious sentiments, which in the main are very orthodox. I have neither patience to hear, talk, or think of anything relative to this matter; for I have squabbled and scolded, abused and ridiculed so long about it to little purpose that I am without common patience.”

His studies were of a wide range, and he was almost unequalled in the Revolutionary period for his detailed and comprehensive knowledge of constitutional law and ancient and modern history. In precocity of mental development he was almost the equal of Hamilton and the younger Pitt. He had a soundness of judgment which excelled that of Hamilton and was far beyond his years in this respect. His capacity for hard work was tremen-

dous, and this doubtless accounted for his ill health. He did not know how to exercise and send the physical man to bed as tired as the mental man.

The gathering storm of events soon caught him up and put him in a position where he had little time to think of his ills or indulge himself in morbid fancies. In 1774, when but twenty-three years of age, he was appointed a member of the county committee of safety and his career launched before the public. Two years later, he was sent as a delegate to the state convention at Williamsburg, where a constitution was to be drawn up for that commonwealth.

His talents were so favorably known among that group of distinguished men that he was appointed on the committee to deal with the drafting of a constitution. He sat in committee on Mason's famous Bill of Rights and later, on the floor of the Assembly succeeded in forcing an amendment to the article relating to religious freedom. This shows his ability and his qualities as a thinker better than anything he ever did.

Mason's draft, as reported in a previous chapter, provided that "all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, unpunished and unrestrained by the magistrate, unless, under color

of religion, any man disturb the peace, happiness, or safety of society.”

When the Bill came before the Assembly, Madison moved an amendment. He pointed out that there was a distinction between the recognition of an absolute right and mere toleration for its exercise. He contended that toleration implied the right of jurisdiction. He then offered an amendment providing that “all men are equally entitled to the full and free exercise of it according to the dictates of conscience,” and that “no man or class of men ought, on account of religion, to be invested with peculiar emoluments or privileges, nor subjected to any penalties or disabilities, unless, under color of religion, the preservation of equal liberty and the existence of the state be manifestly endangered.” He won his point, but when the Bill was adopted, his language was reduced, the Assembly feeling that the final form covered all the points. It has remained as follows: “That religion, or the duty we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience.”

Thus, the twenty-five-year-old statesman removed for all time any doubt as to the right of any religious sentiment attempting to dictate to

any one else in this country the manner of discharging religious duties, and took away any vestige of right on the part of the civil authorities to meddle in the matter.

He was made a member of the first Assembly to sit under the new Constitution, but when he stood for re-election, he was defeated because he held himself aloof from the usual electioneering practices of the day. He refused to solicit votes or to buy drinks and otherwise treat his constituents. This was not so great a loss to himself, personally, for he was chosen a member of the governor's council in spite of his youth.

In 1780, one of the gloomiest years of the entire war, he was sent as a delegate to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, proving that he had steadily grown in the esteem of his fellow-citizens. He was probably the youngest man in years in that august body, but certainly the equal of any of them in dignity and decorum.

His correspondence at this period gives an interesting sidelight on the financial embarrassment of the delegates and the expedients to which they resorted to secure the necessities of life. In a letter to Edmund Randolph, he says: "I cannot in any way make you more sensible of the importance of your kind attention to pecuniary remittances for me, than by informing you that I have for some time past been a pensioner on the favor

of Haym Salomon, a Jew broker." In a later letter, he adds: "The kindness of our little friend in Front Street, near the coffee house, is a fund which will preserve me from extremities; but I never resort to it without great mortification, as he obstinately rejects all recompense. The price of money is so usurious that he thinks it ought to be extorted from none but those who aim at profitable speculations. To a necessitous delegate he gratuitously spares a supply out of his private stock."

Although young in years, he seems never to have been young. His need for money was about the only indication, in all the letters he wrote, that he was like others. His letters have a lofty and decorous chastity about them, a continual repression when there is good news to communicate, an absence of interest in the military news beyond the scantest mention, that has never ceased to earn the notice of the student. Perhaps, this stilted and aloof manner is what makes Mr. Madison—he is always "Mr. Madison"—so uninteresting to the average reader of biography.

At twenty-one, in marked contrast to the usual young blade of the day, we find him writing a friend not "to suffer those impertinent fops that abound in every city to divert you from your business and philosophical amusements. . . . You will make them respect and admire you more by show-

ing your indignation at their follies, and by keeping them at a becoming distance."

"Keeping them at a becoming distance"—that is the distinguishing trait of a certain type of student. Not your gay, rollicking student, to be sure, but one who is weighed down by the gravity of his knowledge, and feels a stern sense of responsibility to himself and to the work which may fall to his lot.

Madison was a member of the Congress that met following Cornwallis' defeat and there he came into personal contact with Alexander Hamilton. The two were to be the chief actors, in every project before the country almost, until Hamilton was killed more than twenty years later. There was much in common that drew them together. They were both men possessing minds of the first order; they were younger than most of their colleagues—and while they might differ radically in personal appearance and tastes, they were both equally imbued with the loftiest of patriotic sentiments.

Madison's principal distinction in this session was his service as chairman of the committee appointed to draw up instructions to Mr. Jay, then on a mission to Spain. The chief point was Madison's insistence that the new government should demand from that haughty power the free and unrestricted right of navigation on the Mississippi

River, then the western boundary of the State of Virginia.

His speech on this subject was a masterpiece in its thoroughness and completeness. To this day there has remained nothing that could be added to what he said. I wish I had the space to reprint herewith his notes for that address. They show the care with which he covered every point, and the habit of reducing everything to writing in a concise and orderly fashion which persisted throughout his lifetime.

He came to see at this session the principal weakness of the existing form of government. It lay in the inability of Congress to raise money. He and Hamilton worked together to secure power for Congress to levy a tax on imports in order to pay off the public debt which, at that time, approximated some forty million dollars.

It was a long and wordy battle as even necessary expedients must be in the legislative assembly of a free and independent people, but they gradually made headway. However, they disagreed on one point. A certain faction, jealous of thus granting a life-giving power to Congress, sought to limit the period over which Congress should have this power to twenty years. Madison agreed and Hamilton—far-sighted and impatient to set up a real government even then—opposed it. Many historians profess to see in this split the beginning

of political parties in this country. While it did constitute the first line of cleavage, it hardly seems to have been so serious as the two young men later stood together at the Constitutional Convention in 1787.

Another precedent arose out of this same bill which was much more far-reaching in its effects and that was the disagreement over the question of whether slaves should be counted in the slave-holding states as "population" under the terms of the revenue act. The non-slave states contended that they should; naturally, the slave states were not anxious to pay taxes on the 750,000 slaves then in the country.

As the contest waged back and forth, Madison it was who finally came forward with the compromise which won. He said: "In order to give a proof of the sincerity of his professions of liberality, he proposed that slaves should be rated as five to three." This proposal won, as he said, "without opposition." It is interesting to note that it was the precedent for the five-to-three rule adopted later by the Constitutional Convention which caused so much trouble and projected a bitterness of political strife before the country which did not end until the Civil War.

Mr. Gay is authority for the statement that at this time romance entered the life of the young legislator and it seemed that, at last, the young

man had become young. He met Miss Catherine Floyd, daughter of General William Floyd of Long Island. She was then a girl of sixteen, of unusual beauty and vivacity, and it seems that the sturdy old general, who had signed the immortal Declaration and was still in Congress, did all that he could to encourage the match. Madison was thirty-two years of age, but old in manner and bearing. He talked gravely of the questions of the hour with the old general, who predicted a brilliant future for him. If there were any delicious moments in the moonlight when the young-old man forgot himself and really made a bit of love to the sprightly Catherine, we have no hint of it.

At any rate, they became engaged and all went well until a young clergyman appeared on the scene and "hung round her at the harpischord." From that time on the lure of ambition seems to have departed and the ways of love proved the more fascinating to the young lady in question. She had her way, in spite of the protests of the old general, and soon sent the serious Mr. Madison on his way. Gay says that she sealed her letter with a bit of rye-dough, which he thinks had some mischievous meaning.

Madison seems to have rushed to Jefferson with his misery, as he did with everything that touched his observation throughout a long life, for about

this time Jefferson wrote him: "I sincerely lament the misadventure which has happened, from whatever cause it may have happened. Should it be final, however, the world presents the same and many other sources of happiness, and you possess many within yourself. Firmness of mind and unintermitting occupation will not long leave you in pain." No one knew better than Jefferson that this was the merest piffle, this high-sounding advice he attempted to give—he, who fell in a swoon when his beloved Martha was snatched away from him and who vowed for days that he did not care to look upon the world again! Of course, the sad young man got over it, just as Mr. Jefferson got over his grief, but not for the casual reasons given above.

Madison turned up the next year in the Virginia Assembly for the purpose, as he said: "to rescue the Union," and distinguished himself by attempting through a port bill to legislate the planters of his state into the habit of using only one or two ports of entry in order to build up a metropolis in the south.

Sometime later he originated the movement which later resulted in the calling of the Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia, where he was to make his most important contribution to the country. He wrote a letter to Jefferson, then a member of the Continental Congress, in which

he suggested that a convention of the states interested in the Potomac question be called. He hoped that all of the states might be summoned, but he asks Jefferson to sound out particularly the Maryland delegates.

Jefferson replied: "Finding him of the same opinion, I have told him I would, by letters, bring the subject forward on our part. They will consider it, therefore, as originated by this conversation." Mr. Jefferson seems to have been careful to leave the impression that he was the originator of the suggestion and he lets Madison know it so both will tell the same story! Mr. Jefferson sometimes had these lapses in little details, but he was always careful to keep the record straight for Jefferson.

They moved slowly in those days and it was not until 1785 that the commissioners met. They soon found that the question of regulating the commerce on the Potomac was more far-reaching than they had supposed, so another convention was proposed by Madison and it subsequently came together at Annapolis. It was this convention which was attended by Alexander Hamilton who aided Madison's scheme for getting a convention of all the states together, by issuing his famous appeal to the country that resulted in the Constitutional Convention. The two men had been working together, independently it seems, but together never-

theless from opposite ends of the country to accomplish the same result.

In the meantime, he still had a service or two to render in the Virginia Assembly which cannot be ignored. He successfully resisted the paper-money craze then sweeping the country, and he put through the Assembly Mr. Jefferson's "an act for establishing religious freedom," which ended for all time in Virginia the attempt of the clergy to gain support by public taxation. It was a memorable battle and greatly pleased Jefferson, then in France, who wrote exultantly of its reception on the other side.

Madison worked with all his energy and talent to assure the success of the Constitutional Convention. He seems, in great measure, to deserve the credit for getting General Washington to attend and that fact, more than any other, brought in all the states. Just three weeks before the convention was to convene, he wrote: "The nearer the crisis approaches, the more I tremble for the issue. The necessity of gaining the concurrence of the convention to some system that will answer the purpose, the subsequent approbation of Congress, and the final sanction of the States, present a series of chances which would inspire despair in any case where the alternative was less formidable."

Virginia came to the Constitutional Convention with a distinguished delegation and it is an

interesting fact to note the high place Madison had won, among that distinguished group, when he was given the place of leadership and his plan, with few modifications, was accepted by the delegation for presentation as the "Virginia plan." Of course, Madison was not the unqualified author of it, for some of the important features originated in the brain of George Mason, but the relation of the parts to the whole show the masterly hand of the young statesman.

He became, more than any other man, the outstanding figure at the Convention. Hamilton was embarrassed by a hostile delegation, as we have seen in the preceding sketch, and forced to lie low through most of the active debate that took place. It was Madison who carried the brunt of the battle on the floor and in the committee room, and he brought to his labors a calm, lofty and unselfish viewpoint. He was willing to listen to others.

A detailed account of what took place in the Constitutional Convention is not possible in a brief sketch such as this. Madison's conduct was such, however, that he earned the proud title "Father of the Constitution," which has endured to this day.

The chief points of difference rested in the struggles between the states-rights party and those in favor of a strong central government even, if

necessary, at the expense of the powers of the respective states. There was a question of reconciling the powers of large and small states in the new government so that they might be equally divided which provoked a great deal of discussion.

Madison soon declared that that question was not nearly so dangerous to the movement for a union of the states, as was the possibility of division between the North and the South. He repeated this so much and finally when he secured the five-to-three rule in counting the slaves as population for purposes of representation in Congress and thereby conferred political power on the slaveholders, he sowed the seeds which later caused the Civil War. All parties seemed to think then that the slave question was settled peaceably for all time. It was the least settled of them all.

It was this compromise, secured largely by the trading of Morris of New York with Pinckney of South Carolina and the New England States that caused George Mason to refuse to sign the Constitution and oppose it at home. He hated slavery, although a slave-holder, and wanted it wiped out altogether. By allowing South Carolina to import slaves for twenty years and by recognizing the right of slave-holders to recover their slaves in any part of the United States, the North gained the right to pass legislation in the Congress by a

majority rather than by two-thirds vote. It was a dear price to pay.

Madison, himself, was not in favor of the slave trade but he was gunning for the bigger bag and it seemed before this compromise was effected that the labors of the Convention would result in failure.

The exultation of the southern delegates when they returned home can be gathered from Pinckney's comments: "We are so weak that by ourselves we could not form a union strong enough for the purpose of effectually protecting each other. Without union with the other states, South Carolina must soon fall. . . . By this settlement we have secured an unlimited importation of negroes for twenty years; nor is it declared that the importation shall be then stopped; it may be continued. We have a security that the general government can never emancipate them, for no such authority is granted. . . . We have obtained a right to recover our slaves, in whatever part of America they may take refuge, which is a right we had not before. In short, considering all circumstances, we have made the best terms, for the security of this species of property, it was in our power to make."

But Madison was not so happy. He said: "Twenty years will produce all the mischief that can be apprehended from the liberty to import

slaves. So long a term will be more dishonorable to the American character than to say nothing about it in the Constitution." It seems that if the Northern States had known the weakness Pinckney so frankly admitted at home that the slavery question might easily have been solved for all time. Only Georgia and South Carolina were in favor of it. The compromise was made to bring them in; had the North known their real feeling—that they must come in or fall—an entirely different bargain might have resulted.

When the Convention closed, Madison was in an unhappy frame of mind concerning the strength of the new government proposed. He wrote a letter to Jefferson which reveals that he was subject to the doubts and fears which assail all mortals: "I hazard an opinion that the plan, should it be adopted, will neither effectually answer its national object, nor prevent the local mischiefs which excite disgusts against the state governments."

He did not long remain in doubt, however. The more he studied what had actually been accomplished, the more convinced he became of the wisdom and desirability of the new form of government. He joined with Hamilton in the production of the famous Federalist Papers. Of the total of eighty in that series, he personally produced twenty-nine, according to his own account.

It is an interesting sidelight on the remarkable

way in which the minds of Hamilton and Madison moved in common thought that it is hard for the student to tell to this day just which of the papers each wrote. Most have been identified but some remain in dispute.

Madison might have produced more of these papers if he had not been called to the Virginia Convention to defend the document against the assaults of Henry, Mason, Randolph and Lee—certainly a formidable array of talent. Patrick Henry, always a dangerous and skillful antagonist, used all the art he possessed in political artifice to out-manoeuvre Madison, Marshall and the other Federalists. Mason was there with his logic and his knack for sarcasm.

The Federalists won, however, by the slender margin of ten votes. If Madison had been busy at the Constitutional Convention, he was more so at this struggle. He was then thirty-eight years of age, in the very prime of his life and it seems remarkable indeed that he had the physical strength to continue at the helm. He is described at this time by a distinguished French traveler as having "an air of fatigue; perhaps it was the effect of the immense labors to which he has devoted himself for some time past. His look announces a censor, his conversation discovers a man of learning, and his reserve was that of a man conscious of his talents and of his duties."

Madison had purchased his victory at a long price, however, so far as his own personal popularity was concerned. Patrick Henry was still smarting under his defeat in the convention and he had sworn undying hostility to the fortunes and person of the man whom he considered most responsible for it. The Assembly was charged with the duty of selecting two senators to represent the state in the new Senate. He gave out particular word that Madison of all men was not to be selected and he held sufficient power to force his will when, at that time, it was looked upon as being the most contemptible of political wire-pulling even within the party Henry controlled.

The Assembly also had the right, under the Constitution, to apportion the respective districts which would elect members of the new House of Representatives. Madison had had no real desire to become a member of the Senate because he did not feel that he had the means to maintain the station then demanded of such an office, but he did want to become a member of the House.

Henry proceeded to arrange Madison's district in such a manner, by attaching to it counties friendly to himself that he thought Madison's defeat was insured. This caused Madison to throw aside his earlier reserve in political contests and actively canvass his district for votes. His opponent was James Monroe, and not much later

they were both to lie down together in the same political bed. Madison won, and he won largely because of the indignation aroused by Patrick Henry's high-handed attempt to destroy his enemy. At that day, party politics had not been developed to a point where men would vote in the interests of party, contrary to their notions of honor and dignity. Had Mr. Henry not been so open in his methods and so single-handed in his purpose—had he taken care to apportion all of the counties in the state, he no doubt would have defeated Madison.

This contest, and the hair-breadth escape it afforded him, seems to have had a profound effect upon Madison. At any rate, he soon entered upon the second stage of his career which eventually landed him in the White House, but did not add materially to his reputation. His real work seems to have been definitely ended and it is true that had he passed off the stage then for the rest of his life, his reputation among us today would be just as great as it is. But, like many others to come after him, he changed his statesman's cloak for the politician's garments and his progress was downward instead of forward.

The early days of the First Congress were taken up in settling such momentous questions as what title should be given the President of the United States. John Adams seems to have started the ball

rolling when he asked the advice of the Senate on the question of how he should address Washington when he came to take his oath. The Senate gravely proposed that the title should be, "His Highness, the President of the United States and the Protector of their Liberties." It was finally wisely decided that no title could be given the Chief Executive that was not conferred in the Constitution.

Immediately upon the organization of the House, as soon as a quorum had been obtained, Madison introduced a revenue act which occupied six weeks of debate. It further drew the line between the North and the South over the slavery question and the former was finally forced to ignore the provision in the Constitution for taxing imported negroes at ten dollars each.

Madison was then author of the act creating the executive departments of Foreign Affairs, Treasury and War. Almost as soon as these departments were organized and the Secretary of the Treasury had been appointed, Madison came to be known as the leader of the opposition to the administration, so marked did his clashes with Hamilton's policies become. At first there was surprise, then doubt, then indignation among the Federalists as his course became more apparent.

He opposed Hamilton's financial policy from the start, although he agreed with him that the

most pressing need of the new government was a strong credit. Hamilton won his plan of assuming the debts of the state governments only by trading votes so that the national capital would be located on the banks of the Potomac, a shrewd move. Madison wrote to Monroe: "If the Potomac succeeds, it will have resulted from a fortuitous coincidence of circumstances which might never happen again." Then he justified his part in it by saying: "I cannot deny that the crisis demands a spirit of accommodation to a certain extent. If the measure should be adopted, I shall wish it to be considered as an unavoidable evil, and *possibly* not the worst side of the dilemma." Madison was not above keeping quiet even in the face of great wrongs to the country at large, if he thought his own beloved Virginia was to profit in the transaction.

When Madison got off the broad plane of national interest and began to set his sails according to local interest, his influence began to wane and he experienced for the first time in his legislative career the pangs of defeat. What seemed to worry Madison and Jefferson the most, in Hamilton's financial policy, was the fact that Northern speculators had bought up the obligations of the states at fifteen and twenty cents on the dollar and Hamilton was insisting on redeeming them at par. They made a great virtue of their indignation and

of their arguments, but the law and the national interest was against them and they lost.

The most objectionable result of the whole controversy was the attempt on their part, in which they were aided and abetted by Monroe, to personally ruin Hamilton and force his retirement from public office in disgrace. But they reckoned without their host. He was entirely too quick and too energetic to be caught napping and he utterly confounded them at every turn. It did not seriously injure Hamilton's influence but it did arouse his anger against his old colleague. Jefferson was carrying on a similar campaign in the Cabinet and the ultimate result was the success of the Jeffersonian party in 1800, although not until Hamilton, himself, had made possible its success by his quarrel with Adams.

Madison, during his last years in Congress, became acquainted with Mrs. Dolly Payne Todd, an attractive young widow of considerable talent and a famous conversationalist, and soon married her. She was then twenty-six years of age and he was forty-three. Dolly Madison, by her rare charm as a hostess, became the most famous woman in the country and the most popular mistress the White House ever had. Even after her husband's death she purchased a house overlooking Lafayette Square, near the White House, and continued to hold her "court" over the famous men of the

times. It is said that Webster and Lord Ashburton arranged the terms of their famous treaty in her house.

He was in retirement for the three years prior to Jefferson's inauguration as President. During this time he built himself a house which is still standing today. He interested himself in politics from the sidelines, writing many letters to Jefferson and others, contributing articles to the newspapers and maintaining all the time the viewpoint of the politician and party leader.

When Thomas Jefferson entered the White House he summoned his old friend and faithful lieutenant to his Cabinet as Secretary of State, a position which he, himself, had first occupied. There Madison served throughout the eight years Jefferson remained in office.

While he was head of the Cabinet, he had little chance to distinguish himself. No occupant of the White House was ever more completely his own President than Thomas Jefferson. He might consult with his advisers but this was no guarantee that he would follow their advice. Since the turn of events made the foreign affairs of the young Republic the most important, Jefferson was largely his own Secretary of State during his entire administration. Madison probably rendered less constructive service to his country during this

eight years than had been the case during any other eight-year period since his public life began.

There were broils with England and France over the way our commerce was treated, each side refusing to recognize our policy of neutrality. The embargo acts were extremely unpopular in this country and practically paralyzed our shipping—we moved inevitably towards the shoals.

In the meantime, Jefferson's term ended and he selected as his successor James Madison. Conditions steadily moved from bad to worse. There was a growing demand throughout the country for redress, the principal hatred being directed against England, although, for some time, the question was whether France or England were the most hated. The politicians seemed determined, finally, that the most popular enemy was England, so the clamor for war against her grew.

The slumbering statesmanship in James Madison seemed to arouse itself for a time. He knew that the country was ill-prepared for war and he resisted the demands in a real spirit of national consciousness, in spite of the fact that his party was making a strenuous demand for the war.

The younger men who came to Congress that year—among them Henry Clay and Calhoun who appeared for the first time—were loud in their demands for war. They came with all the passion and enthusiasm of youth and of the South and

West which they represented. So great was their power, due to the shift of sentiment that, in spite of their youth, Clay was made Speaker of the House and Calhoun eventually became chairman of the powerful Committee on Foreign Relations.

In spite of Madison's natural caution and his soberer judgment on the war issue, he was ambitious for a second term. It is said that in order to win the coveted nomination which, in those days, was conferred by a caucus of the party members in attendance at Congress, he was called in by them and agreed to ask for war if they renominated him.

There is no direct evidence to confirm this charge, except circumstantial evidence. We do know that he was renominated in spite of the dissatisfaction his course had caused, and there was no dissent from the more radical branch of the party. We further know that as soon as the new term was assured him he reversed his former policy and asked for war. John C. Calhoun had the honor to move the declaration on the floor of the House in a passionate, hot-headed speech. And Clay, with that rare gift of his for laughing away easily the fears of his countrymen, boastingly declared that he could capture Canada with a thousand Kentucky riflemen.

It is not possible, nor necessary, to give a detailed history of the War of 1812 herewith, but

it is sufficient to say that James Madison was the last man in the party capable of making a good war president. The failures of the whole war were certainly his responsibility. He well knew the condition of the country during all the agitation for war and he had made no plans for strengthening the country's ability to defend itself. We slipped through by a scratch and only the heroic victories won on the sea saved us from complete failure and a humiliating defeat.

He was absolutely without any military sense whatever and seems to have been no more interested in the military situation than he was during the momentous days in the Revolution when he was attending the Continental Congress. His letters reflect an acute sense of the political situation, however, and he never missed a single political breeze that stirred.

Madison did not greatly enhance his personal following by referring to the great naval victories as "our little naval triumphs," even though he does, by such pleasantries, reveal to us the bent of his mind. Things grew to such a condition that just before the news of peace came the New England States were assembling at Hartford in the famous Hartford Convention for no other purpose than to secede and form a Northern Confederacy, protected, so it is said, by England. Harrison Gray Otis was even dispatched by that

gathering to Washington under sealed orders but before he reached that city news of the Treaty of Ghent reached the country and saved it and Madison. Madison was fully aware of what was going on and he nervously awaited news from across the water to save him from disunion. Then came the news of Jackson's remarkable victory at New Orleans—national pride and confidence was restored and the ship of state passed off the reef.

The most humiliating act of the whole war was the sacking of Washington by the British. Madison, with that supreme ability he had for shutting his eyes to the inevitable, had written to Jefferson, "We do not apprehend invasion by land." In spite of the fact that he was warned two months before Cockburn went up the Potomac by Mr. Gallatin who was then in London that such a plan was on foot, he made no provision to strengthen the defences of the capital.

So completely surprised were the President, his wife and his Cabinet that they barely escaped capture, all fleeing in different directions. The British actually ate that noon the food which had been placed on the President's table to serve his guests! The White House was later burned and it was because the flames blackened the walls of Virginia sandstone that the building was painted white and became known as the White House. Prior to that time it was spoken of as the "Mansion."

Madison lived nearly twenty years after his retirement from the White House. They were not idle years, as he was ever industrious in the things that interested him. He carried on a remarkable correspondence with Jefferson, Monroe and other friends. Indeed, in 1827, he wrote: "I have rarely, during the period of my public life, found my time less at my disposal than since I took my leave of it; nor have I the consolation of finding, that as my powers of application necessarily decline, the demands on them proportionately decrease."

He was an entirely congenial man to meet and a kind master to his slaves. Paul Jennings, one of his slaves who wrote a biography of him, says: "I never saw him in a passion, and never knew him to strike a slave, though he had over a hundred; neither would he allow an overseer to do it."

In personal habits, he was temperate. Jennings claims that he never took more than a glass of wine at dinner and that he habitually weakened it with water. It made no difference what or how much his guests drank. And it is said that during the last fifteen years of his life he drank no wine whatever. Jennings says: "Mr. Madison, I think, was one of the best men that ever lived."

Close students of the man, however, are not so charitable. They see, of course, the man in relation to the work he did and the manner in which

he did it, and often these color his own personal nature. Hildreth baldly states: "He was guilty of the greatest political wrong and crime which it is possible for the head of a nation to commit." And Gay says: ". . . if that false estimate surrounds his name, there is a strong undercurrent of opinion, common among those whose business or whose pleasure it is to look beneath the surface of things historical, that he was wanting in strength of character and in courage. He did not lack discernment as to what was wisest and best; but he was too easily influenced by others, or led by the hope of gaining some glittering prize which ambition coveted, to turn his back upon his own convictions. It was this weakness which swept him beyond his depth into troubled waters where his struggles were hopeless."

When he died he left behind him what he considered his dearest wish to his countrymen and it was: "The advice nearest to my heart and deepest in my convictions is, that the Union of the States be cherished and perpetuated." It was on June 28, 1836, that he breathed his last at Montpelier.

COMPARISON OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON AND JAMES MADISON

It must never cease to be a source of wonder that the minds of two great men could be so alike in some important characteristics and so unlike in others. Nowhere else, in all the great company discussed in this book, has a better example been afforded than in the case of Alexander Hamilton and James Madison.

They were almost on a par in precocity of mental development, both coming on the stage in their very young manhood. Hamilton seems to have had a little of the advantage, getting his foot on the first rung of the ladder at seventeen while Madison was twenty-three when he first attracted the attention of his neighbors. But Madison moved forward more rapidly the next few years, while Hamilton was marking time in the army as it were, but gaining a valuable acquaintanceship with men and an experience in the rough-and-tumble world which was to make him the more rounded and complete character of the two.

The first great contrast was in their personal appearance and habits. Madison was not a mixer with his fellows to any extent. He wanted "to keep them at a becoming distance," whereas Hamilton not only loved to mix with his fellows in the

camp, at the tavern or in the court room, but was accepted and applauded by them wherever he appeared.

Hamilton loved good wine and while he detested those who drank to excess, he never limited himself "to a single glass," as did the cautious and prudent Madison, nor was he ever known to weaken it with water!

Hamilton was not above an occasional intrigue with the fair sex and, on one occasion at least, fairly scandalized his family and friends by publishing the whole business to the world. Madison was too cold and too preoccupied in his "philosophical amusements" to be interested wholly and completely, even for a moment, in the opposite sex. He was utterly incapable of what the French call *le grande passion*. He had no rash moments.

As orators, Hamilton was doubtless the superior because of his greater charm of person and manner. Neither were witty nor did either illuminate their speeches with it. Their manner was one of the utmost intensity while speaking. Hamilton was the more vehement in manner, while the cold, dispassionate manner of Madison in marshalling his points and his facts caused him to be just as effective. Both overcame their adversaries by sheer weight of logic and facts.

As constitutional authorities, there was probably little difference in their abilities. Madison

was probably the more skillful in fitting his knowledge into a workable plan. He was not so impulsive and impatient as Hamilton; he took all the various viewpoints into consideration and sought to keep all in line by compromise—by check and balance—whereas, Hamilton was often irked by viewpoints he considered obviously incorrect and was willing to trample them underfoot to gain his own scheme. Both were actuated by the highest patriotic motives.

Both were ambitious: Madison, more covertly; Hamilton, the more openly and frankly. We have seen how Hamilton took care to see that no impediment should stand between him and the Presidency because of his foreign birth. Madison became so ambitious that he stifled his judgment and his conscience in order to grasp the honor he coveted.

In personal honor, Hamilton was the stronger character. Madison started out in life a strong Federalist but he changed parties in order to save his own political future; then, within his own party, he changed his policy in order to win a second nomination for the Presidency. Just before he died, he left a letter which revealed that he had come back once more to his Federalist leanings.

Hamilton made his political mistakes. He defeated Adams in 1800 and made an effort to snatch the prize himself and he once suggested a

bit of political trickery to the Governor of New York, in order to win an election, but this was due more to his impulsive nature and his impatience, than to a dishonorable strain in his own character. He never, even in these instances, surrendered his convictions to gain personal advantage.

As an executive, Hamilton was the superior. He knew how to rally men to his standard and bring public opinion to his support. Madison was utterly incapable of this, even in time of great patriotic zeal and national stress. He escaped rebellion by a mere scratch. Hamilton was more energetic in preparing for emergencies; Madison had no genius along this line whatever.

As soldiers, there is no comparison between them. Hamilton was a brave and fearless man, personally, and he had that quality of leadership so essential in the successful officer. In battle, he was artful, dashing, prompt. As an organizer he was without parallel in the country. He greatly resembled Napoleon in the sureness of his movements and the speed with which he moved.

Madison was absolutely without military sense. He was the most helpless man in this respect that ever sat in the White House. He did not even surround himself with men capable of correcting for him this weakness. He was, no doubt, greatly lacking in personal courage. He had leaned on

Jefferson too long to have any initiative of his own.

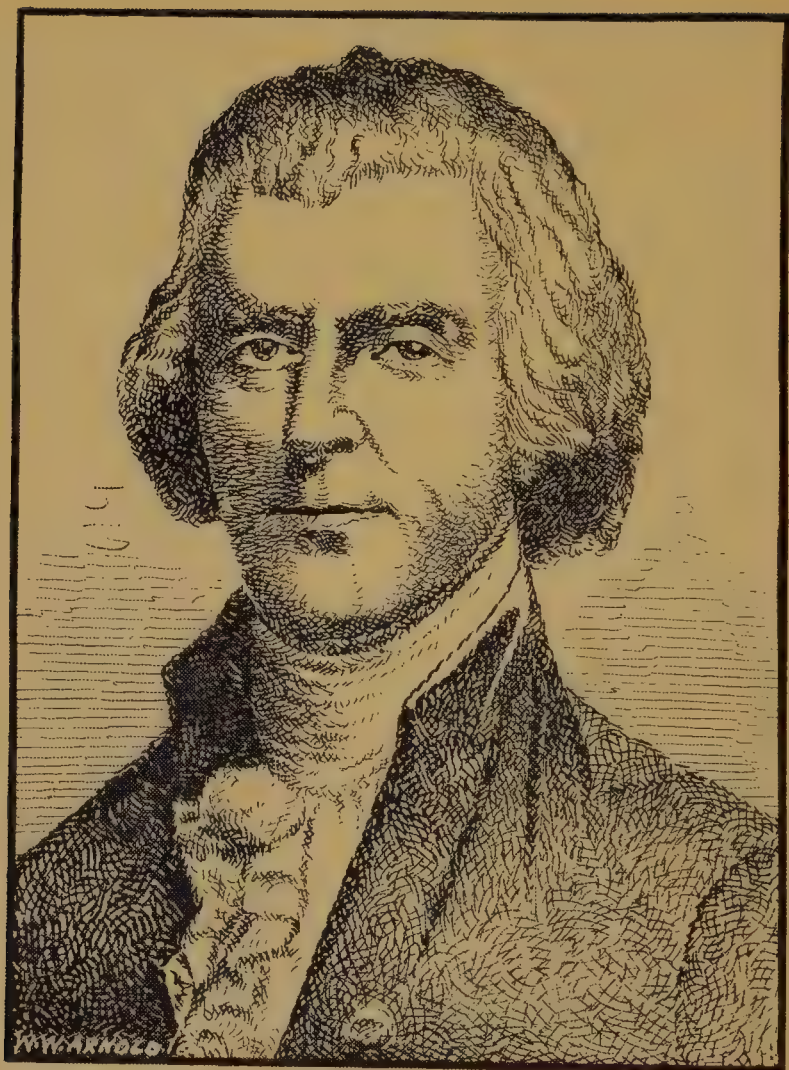
We can never picture to ourselves Madison going out to die for his principles, whatever they might be! It simply was not possible because of the man's makeup; yet Hamilton did that very thing. Hamilton was, therefore, taken by and large, the greater character. That both had their flaws merely proves their humanness.

CHAPTER IV

Popular Champions

THOMAS JEFFERSON

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



THOMAS JEFFERSON

He was the most curious character of our whole history; possessed of amazing talents and equally amazing contradictions.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

SAY what we will, Jefferson is the most curious character we have produced. As we come to know the man and his life, he baffles us at almost every turn. He has had the unhappy faculty of projecting his own doubts and fears beyond his own time; we are never quite sure of him and his purpose. He had a great will to do and an equally great will to undo. In his nature we find all the contradictions of two opposing viewpoints, and there seems to have been an eternal conflict going on within his bosom.

The explanation possibly lies in the strains of blood flowing in his veins. Descended on the one hand direct from the half-brother of Mary, Queen of the Scots, the bluest blood of the "tidewater aristocracy" with all its love of culture, its taste, fine discrimination and sensitiveness, made him heir to all that this implies. On the other hand, he was likewise every inch a Jefferson, a plebeian of the plebeians, tall, robust, well-formed, democratic, natural and human, with a profound dislike for the vainglorious trappings and struttings so necessary to the aristocratic mind.

He was of the old order, and he was not. While he was a builder with one hand, he was the most revolutionary radical and temple-destroyer which

the world had seen in politics up to his time. He seemed to delight in shattering in one broad stroke everyone of the old necessary institutions. He was, at times, bold and fearless and at other times strove with all his cunning and craft studiously to cover up his tracks. A revolutionist, he shrank from open conflict so long as it could be avoided; warfare had no appeal to him personally and the sight of blood unnerved him. One can never picture Jefferson fighting a duel or marching off to war. He had none of the wolf in him; he was more brother to the fox.

His mother, Jane Randolph, had been born in the parish of Shadwell, London, the daughter of William Randolph, who had spent most of his estate in defense of Charles I. After the loss of that struggle, Randolph came to the Turkey Island country on the lower James, in Virginia, to build his fortune anew.

It was in 1738 that Jane Randolph married Peter Jefferson and left her sheltered tidewater abode and followed her husband into the foothills of the Blue Ridge. It is said that the trails of hostile Indians were yet fresh on Peter Jefferson's lands when they came to the wilderness and set about the business of carving a home out of its native timbers.

The new home was built on the Rivanna, a short distance from the site of Monticello and

was named "Shadwell" in honor of the young bride's birthplace. Here Thomas Jefferson was born five years later.

We do not know very much about Peter Jefferson, but we do know enough to see him as an intensely human being. He was strong and straight, handsome as a young god, generous and fearless, jovial and hardworking. He was a good neighbor and did his share of public business, serving as justice of the peace (when that office was a dignity), surveyor and member of the House of Burgesses (1755-57).

He was a man of slight schooling, but a born leader. Everyone liked him and his character was flawless. He had just enough learning to whet his appetite for more, and he greatly enjoyed reading aloud to his family in the long evenings from his favorite authors, Shakespeare, Addison and Swift. Peter Jefferson's longing for the attainments of a classical education was so strong that he provided in his will that Thomas, his first-born, should be given a thorough training in the classics.

This good and generous father died when Thomas was but fourteen years of age. The boy was then fast developing into manhood. He had the frame and strength of his father, his serious outlook on life, his democratic tendencies and the habit of self-reliance and the ability to work of the frontier. The imprint of the Randolphs was upon

him, too. It was revealed in his growing charm and diplomacy, his ear for music and his appreciation of art and culture, his exceeding fine idealism and rare taste, and in the extreme sensitiveness of his nature, which quality, but a little more sharply accented, might have doomed him to misery and failure.

After two and a half years of study at home following his father's death, Jefferson was sent (1760) to Williamsburg, where he entered William and Mary College. He was then seventeen years of age but seemingly much older in mental development and experience than the average youth of such age today. His letters to his guardians reveal an unusual temper for business and keen self-analysis.

Williamsburg was the colonial capital of the Colony. It was not such an imposing town, judged by present standards, but the royal governor lived there and the colonial legislature met there. There was a great deal of pomp and display, silk ruffles, expensive small-swords and clothing displayed, but the houses numbered a scant two hundred and the streets were unpaved and a sea of mud in bad weather.

Jefferson had many fashionable and wealthy relatives in the capital and they took him in, with much evident pride. They doubtless saw in him only the Randolph, as relatives will do, and he

seems to have had so much charm and ability that he soon became one of four, who ate regularly around the governor's table.

The youth doubtless felt that he had made real progress socially and he seemed to have enjoyed the experience while it lasted. One smiles, though, in reading of his evident chagrin and surprise when, on footing up his year's expenses to his guardian, he discovered how much this favor and attention had cost him. His serious self-examination and his repentant nature is revealed in his promise to apply himself more seriously the following year and in his suggestion that the expense be charged to his own share of his estate. He applied himself with such a singleness of purpose to his studies his second year that he won his degree at the end of the year.

He then entered the office of George Wythe, one of the greatest lawyers ever produced by the Virginia bar, who especially excelled as a teacher of young barristers destined to play important parts in the history of the nation. It was Wythe who trained Henry Clay for the bar. This same teacher set John Marshall on the road to fame and usefulness as both lawyer and jurist.

Five years were spent in the study of law before the young man felt competent to apply for a license to practice. Patrick Henry, it will be remembered, deemed himself ready at the end of

six weeks' study. Herein we see the contrast in the temperaments of the two men. Not that Jefferson was a slow student or frittered away his time, but because of the strong disposition to thoroughness in all that he did. Henry was impulsive; he burned hot and quick and on slight provocation. He was not half so concerned about really being as he was in seeming to be. Later he acquired a great deal more stability of nature, but he remained to the last the fiery and impulsive orator.

Jefferson was a true student. A few rules and formulas were as nothing to him; he probed to the bottom and probed so deep that he discovered the underlying viewpoint politically of the chief text-book writers then in favor. He disliked Blackstone and suspected that the average student of him would "slip back into Toryism" if he did not penetrate beneath his smooth language. He found, under the rough phrases and blunt style of Coke the political standards of the Whigs and he approved of it.

The actual practice of the law seems never to have appealed to Jefferson. He appeared in approximately one thousand cases, during his seven years' practice and his average annual income was about three thousand dollars. It appears, then, that his dislike was not founded upon a failure to succeed at the law. Such an income was a princely

sum in those days. It was his sensitive nature again.

He was not a good public speaker. His voice was thin and high-pitched, evidently a Randolph trait, and he could not speak very long without developing a pronounced huskiness. He had no love for combat, whether physical or in the forensic arena. The older he got the more he shrank from contention, and he came to have a very pronounced dislike for lawyers.

In 1820, in his *Memoir*, he pronounces a stinging criticism upon Congress which will not fall upon unresponsive ears today, when he wrote: "How could it be otherwise in a body to which the people send one hundred and fifty lawyers, whose trade it is to question everything, yield nothing, and talk by the hour?" Some years before, in a letter to a friend, he contrasts the satisfaction a physician must feel in contemplating the lives he has saved to the lawyer's conscience-stricken recollection of those who "by his dexterity have been cheated out of their rights and reduced to beggary."

In the meantime he had come of age and assumed his manorial dignity as a country squire. He became a justice of the peace, as his father before him, interested himself in the improvement of his estate and in local affairs. He was tall, handsome, sandy-headed with eyes "flecked with

hazel," quiet mannered, possessed of an unusual education, a charming and generous host, and an efficient and painstaking business man.

While attending the House of Burgesses in the nature of a lobbyist to urge some local improvements, he was privileged to hear Patrick Henry's famous speech against the Stamp Act of the British Parliament. Jefferson was standing at the door during this memorable occurrence and saw Henry snatch the leadership of the House by the narrow margin of a single vote with his matchless eloquence. This burned deep into his consciousness and it definitely marked the political course of the young lawyer for the remainder of his life. All of his aristocratic relatives and friends, the Randolphs, Pendletons, Blands and Wythes were arrayed on the other side. Peyton Randolph, a relative, stormed out of the hall, after it was over, and bumping into Jefferson murmuring under his breath that he would have paid a hundred guineas for the single vote necessary to crush Henry.

But this speech, and the spell of it, was a clarion call to the Jefferson that had slumbered under the Randolph in his nature; it was the wild, fierce cry of the frontier against entrenched conservatism and it found an answer in his heart. Jefferson, himself, forty-five years later makes this acknowledgment in a letter to Henry's biog-

rapher, Wirt: "By those resolutions Mr. Henry took the lead out of the hands of those who had heretofore guided the proceedings of the House. . . . Subsequent events favored the policy of the bolder spirits . . . with whom I went on all points." We have already noted the effect Henry's speech had upon George Mason, then sitting in the House as a delegate, and how it won him body and soul.

It was four years, however, before Jefferson came actively into the arena. He was elected a member of the House of Burgesses. His ability received recognition immediately for he was placed on the committee appointed to draw up a reply to the address of the new governor, Lord Botetourt. This Jefferson did but it was rejected by the committee as not being "sufficiently amplified" and another member of the committee prepared a paper in its place. This greatly affected Jefferson's sensitive nature and produced an effect upon him which he never forgot. "Being a young man as well as a new member," he said, "it made on me an impression proportioned to the sensibility of that time of life."

The House was dissolved by the governor, but the members reconvened at the Raleigh Tavern and addressed resolutions to their constituents and the country at large adopting the suggestion of boycotting British goods made by George Mason.

Every member who signed those resolutions was endorsed for re-election by the people of Virginia.

It was a period of growth and development for Jefferson in his private affairs. He commenced, about 1770, the building of his own manor house on the top of his favorite mountain, which he called "Monticello." The burning of the mansion at Shadwell that year hastened the work on the new home.

It is said that Jefferson was the architect of the place and that much of the early work was done with his own hands. The mansion does not seem to be especially large but as a matter of fact it contains thirty-five rooms. Most of the rooms are small and the house has a multitude of halls. The principal points of interest are the hallway where Tarleton's dragoons rode, the horse-shoe prints still to be seen in the floor, the dining room and breakfast room and Jefferson's bedroom and office.

The bedroom has remained in my consciousness as the most curious nook in the whole mansion. Here his extreme fastidiousness crops out in amazing fashion. It is hard to reconcile oneself to the bed as the place of repose of a strong and active man. It lingers still in my mind as a more appropriate nest for some Marie Antoinette or Madame DuBarry. It is distinctly and entirely feminine in its every appointment. The bedstead

is a gorgeous thing in gold leaf, fantastic and frilled, a great blue velvet hanging clustered against the wall, tied with golden cords. The bed is covered with an exquisite and flimsy lace coverlet decidedly unmasculine.

His sensitiveness and shrinking or secretive trait is further revealed in the large number of secret passageways which cross and bisect the lawn in almost every direction, connecting each of the outbuildings to the mansion house. This was done, doubtless, to subordinate these typical covered runways so common in Colonial times, to the architectural scheme of the mansion house, but they may reveal something of the other nature also.

Each of the main passageways ends in little brick structures which timidly rear their heads above the ground, one being Jefferson's law office. This building is perched on the side of the mountain nearest Charlottesville, which village can be seen three miles below in the haze. Tradition claims that it was from a spot near this building that Jefferson discovered Tarleton's dragoons filling the streets of Charlottesville on that memorable morning when he escaped to Carter's Mountain.

On New Year's eve, 1772, Jefferson brought to this house his bride, Martha Skelton, a young widow of twenty-three. It is said that a heavy snow made it impossible for them to reach

the house in their cutter and that the happy young couple were forced to wade through the drifts afoot to complete the last part of the journey.

Shortly after the marriage, Mrs. Jefferson's health began to fail and although she lingered for ten years, much of the time as an invalid, she gave birth to five daughters, only two of whom grew beyond babyhood. They were Martha, who married a Randolph, and Maria. Jefferson loved them passionately and they were his constant companions. He never fully recovered from the loss of his wife and never remarried. The union was unusually happy and marked by that devotion and love which one would expect to find in such a nature.

In the meantime, the political situation grew gradually darker. The radicals were in complete control of the House of Burgesses and met each encroachment of their rights with increasingly bold and staunch replies. Jefferson's talent with the pen was beginning to be busily employed, as his group or party discovered that he had an unusual faculty of expression. He served on the committees appointed to address the Crown and the world, and he was the member chosen to draft the resolutions. It seems that his earlier experience stood him in good stead and that he took care to "sufficiently amplify" his arguments, although

they kept pace with the temper of the times and became increasingly bolder and blunt.

In 1774 Jefferson was selected to represent his county in a convention called at Williamsburg. This was principally for the purpose of selecting delegates to the Continental Congress convening at Philadelphia. The instructions to the delegates were drawn up by Jefferson himself in the county convention. They pledged the co-operation of the Virginians "with their fellow-subjects in every part of the Empire for the re-establishment and guaranteeing such their constitutional rights, when, where and by whomsoever invaded."

During the summer Jefferson prepared a document to be furnished the Virginia delegates to the Continental Congress setting out Virginia's position in the controversy, but on his way was taken ill and had to return to Monticello. He forwarded two copies, one to Patrick Henry and the other to Peyton Randolph, who was now on the side of the radicals. The members thought the document "too bold for the present state of things," and adopted a milder set of instructions. Jefferson's friends, however, printed the paper under the title, "A Summary View of the Rights of British America."

It instantly made a marked impression and became the first of that remarkable list of pamphlets and papers on the Revolution which clearly set

the case of the Colonies before the world, enlisted its sympathy, aroused public opinion in this country to a state of resistance, and did more to assure success than one hundred regiments.

From that minute on, he became a national figure and he continued to move on the national stage as an important actor until his retirement from the presidency some thirty-five years later.

He was soon elected an alternate to Congress to take the place of Peyton Randolph, in case that gentleman should be recalled to preside over the Virginia House of Burgesses. This body convened on June 1, 1775, on call of Governor Dunmore to receive a proposal from the British Ministry that if the colony would agree to raise a certain sum of money, the local legislature might determine the means whereby it would be raised.

Randolph returned from Philadelphia but he asked Jefferson to remain in Williamsburg long enough to write an answer to the Governor who, by this time, had fled, aboard a ship-of-war. This paper was a firm refusal, ending with the statement: "We consider ourselves as bound in honor, as well as interest, to share one general fate with our sister colonies, and should hold ourselves base deserters of that union to which we have acceded, were we to agree on any measures distinct and separate from them."

Jefferson arrived in Philadelphia on June 20,

just in time to see General Washington leave to take command of the army at Boston. Jefferson was then only thirty-two years of age, the third youngest man in that body, Edward Rutledge and John Jay being younger. But his reputation was probably as great as any man in that body with the exception of Doctor Franklin. His papers, *A Summary View* and *Reply to Lord North*, had made him famous. John Adams has testified that "he brought with him a reputation for literary science and a happy talent of composition. Writings of his were handed about, remarkable for their peculiar felicity of expression." Adams also testifies that in committee Jefferson's opinion was "prompt, frank, explicit and decisive."

The young penman was soon called upon to exercise his powers. The Battle of Bunker Hill greatly alarmed those patriots who were professing to desire no war with Great Britain and who were protesting that their intention was to remain in the Empire. Congress appointed a committee to explain and justify this resort to arms "in a declaration to be published by General Washington upon his arrival at the camp before Boston."

Rutledge brought in a report but it was unsatisfactory and Jefferson and John Dickinson were added to the committee. "I prepared a draft," says Jefferson, "of the Declaration committed to us. It was too strong for Mr. Dickinson. . . . We

therefore requested him to take the paper and put it into a form that he could approve. He did so, preparing an entire new statement, and preserving of the former only the last four paragraphs and half the preceding one. We approved and reported it to Congress, who accepted it."

Around this statement a great controversy has waged. Dr. George H. Moore of the New York Historical Society, who examined the papers in 1882 at the State Department, found a draft of the entire declaration, with corrections and interlinings in the handwriting of John Dickinson. These extended all through the document and it seems that no more of Jefferson's original draft was preserved in the last four and one-half paragraphs than in the rest of the paper.

Dr. Moore reveals his bias, when he says: "If any man can discover any good, honest reason why Mr. Jefferson wrote such a story in his Autobiography, he will render a seasonable and important service to the much exalted reputation of the author." This is only a sample of the sneers and innuendos which have attended nearly every act of Jefferson's long career. Just why Jefferson made the statement we do not know, but we may well conclude that he had no sinister motive in doing so.

When Congress adjourned, Jefferson returned to the Virginia convention at Richmond, where

he remained long enough to see the beginning of the establishment of religious freedom in the first breach made in the exclusive privileges of the Established Church. Henry Clay's father was a leader in securing a resolution by the convention permitting dissenters to preach in camp meetings.

In the fall of 1775 Jefferson returned to Congress, saddened by the death of his second child, Jane, the failing health of his wife and his mother. Like all planters he was very much alarmed by the effort of Governor Dunmore to bring about an uprising of the slaves. He had about eighty negroes at Monticello and there were only thirty-four whites. We understand his anxiety when he writes to Francis Eppes, saying that in the seven weeks since he arrived in Philadelphia he has not heard one word from Virginia. "The suspense under which I am is too terrible to be endured; if anything has happened, for God's sake let me know it." He could restrain his anxiety only until near the end of December when he returned home, where he remained for four and one-half months. His critics have severely condemned him for this, but it now seems that he was not merely taking his ease at home. There is good evidence to show that he had returned to Virginia to quietly work for an instruction for a move on the part of Congress for independence.

This is borne out by the fact that as soon as the

Virginian convention adopted such an instruction that he promptly returned to Congress and was named by that body as first on a committee to draw up the proper declaration. That document, of which Jefferson was the author, caused a very bitter debate on the floor of Congress on July 2-4, and it was not until August 2 that most of the members were persuaded to sign it, contrary to Jefferson's statement that it was accepted on July 4 and "signed by every member present except Mr. Dickinson." Strange as it may seem, the country has followed Jefferson's mistaken memory and observes the day he mentions.

As usual, his critics have sought to belittle his connection with this great document which defines and bounds the principles upon which our government will rest as long as it endures. In later years, John Adams became very bitter against Jefferson, and has this to say about the Declaration in a letter to Pickering: ". . . there is not an idea in it but what had been hackneyed in Congress for two years before. Indeed, the essence of it is contained in a pamphlet, voted and printed by the town of Boston, before the first Congress met, composed by James Otis, as I suppose in one of his lucid intervals, and pruned and polished by Samuel Adams."

Jefferson answered this attack, by saying: "Otis' pamphlet I never saw, and whether I had gathered

my ideas from reading or reflection I do not know. I only know that I turned to neither book nor pamphlet while writing it. I did not consider it as any part of my charge to invent new ideas altogether, and to offer no sentiments which had ever been expressed before."

Jefferson's power with the pen lay in his ability to marshal all the arguments for the position taken, to assert them clearly and without wasting motion. He had the happy faculty of focusing attention to the main and vital point and in making his argument so reasonable and so convincing as to be understood by even the lowest citizen in learning in the land.

The Declaration of Independence divided the country into two camps. There was no longer hesitation and doubt on the part of the main body of citizenry. Wonder and worry over how we could fight the King and still profess to be his loyal subjects vanished, and a great wave of national enthusiasm swept the land. It is interesting to note that out of all his achievements, Jefferson asked that the first to be inscribed on the monument marking his grave was: "Author of the Declaration of American Independence."

His service in Congress soon terminated, as he resigned to return to Virginia, his "country," to take a hand in the reform of the entire Virginia code, which he saw was at variance with the repub-

lican principles laid down in the Declaration. He took his seat in the Virginia House of Delegates on the first meeting held under the new constitution.

He was promptly appointed to several important committees and his first blow aimed at the established order was a bill "to enable tenants in tail to convey their lands in fee simple." It was the first great shock which the aristocratic classes were to receive at the hands of the young lawyer. These classes had been based on the transmission of undivided estates from one generation to another and the practice had formed, according to Jefferson, "a patrician order distinguished by the splendor and luxury of their establishments." "To annul this privilege and instead of an aristocracy of wealth . . . to make an opening for the aristocracy of virtue and talent, which nature has wisely provided for the direction of the interest of society and scattered with equal hand through all its conditions, was deemed essential to a well-ordered republic."

When the law of entails fell, the equally pernicious institution of primogeniture went with it. It is said that Pendleton argued that the eldest son should be permitted to receive at least a double portion, but Jefferson replied that unless the eldest son required a double portion of food,

or did a double portion of work, the law should not award him a double portion of property!

Imagine the social revolution the repeal of this one law worked in Virginia. It threw every acre of land into the economic barter and put every heir on exactly the same footing. The landed aristocracy had been built on land from time immemorial and they clung to it with religious devotion. They never forgave Jefferson for this body blow aimed at them; many were Jefferson's own relatives, and when his only son died in infancy in 1777, these aristocrats pronounced it the judgment of God.

He worked heart and soul to bring about the passage of a bill for religious freedom, but it was not until seven years after he left the Virginia Assembly, and while he was serving as minister in Paris, that James Madison secured the passage of the bill which Jefferson had originally drafted. Extracts of this famous statute follow:

“Well aware that the opinions and beliefs of men depend not on their own will, but follow involuntarily the evidence proposed to their minds; that Almighty God hath created the mind free, and manifested his supreme will that free it shall remain, by making it altogether insusceptible of restraint; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness; . . . that the impious pre-

sumption of legislature and ruler, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others . . . hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical; . . . that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions any more than on our opinions in physics or geometry; . . . that the opinions of men are not the object of civil government, nor under its jurisdiction; . . . that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself . . . errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them: We the General Assembly of Virginia do enact that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in its body or goods, or shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or beliefs; but that all men shall be free to profess and by argument to maintain their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.”

Jefferson was very proud of this achievement and the second item which I found on his monu-

ment at Monticello, put there by his own direction, was: Author of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom. He also worked hard to secure the passage of laws emancipating the slaves but in this he was doomed to disappointment. He proposed many bills which would make a start in the desired direction, but they were all rejected. He even proposed that children born of slave mothers "should continue with their parents to a certain age, then be brought up at public expense, to tillage, arts or sciences, according to their geniuses, till the females should be eighteen and the males twenty-one years of age," then to be sent to a proper place and furnished with goods and stock by the government and protected by it until they were able to take care of themselves. In 1821, he wrote of this plan: "It was found that the public mind would not bear the proposition, nor will it bear it even to this day. Yet the day is not distant when it must bear and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free."

Another project for which he worked zealously was the establishment of free public schools. He was disappointed and put off, and finally a system of local option adopted which made little progress. But he never lost faith in his idea that edu-

cation was necessary for the masses, if the republican government was to endure.

He wrote, as late as 1816: "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." Again, he wrote: "I know that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, *institutions must advance also*, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors."

And, on another occasion, he wrote: "There are two subjects which I shall claim a right to further as long as I have breath: the public education and the subdivision of the counties into wards (townships). I consider the continuance of Republican government as absolutely hanging on these two hooks. Where every man is a sharer in the direction of his ward republic or of some of the higher ones, and feels that he is a participator in the government of affairs, not merely at an election one day in the year, but every day; when there shall not be a man in the state who will not be a member of some one of its councils, great or

small, he will let the heart be torn out of his body sooner than his power be wrested from him by a Caesar or a Bonaparte."

The four proposals already mentioned, the bills on entail and primogeniture, religious freedom and public education, were the very basis of Jefferson's movement to bring about a complete social reform in Virginia. In his *Memoir*, he says: "I considered four of these bills, passed or reported, as forming a system by which every fibre would be eradicated of an ancient or future aristocracy, and a foundation laid for a government truly republican."

His growing hold on the assembly is revealed in the fact that he was chosen Governor of Virginia to succeed Patrick Henry, who had served three successive terms. Jefferson's service as governor all but wrecked his political fortunes. His enemies have made much of his inability to accomplish a successful defense of the state against the raids of Arnold and Tarleton, and the invasion of Cornwallis.

As governor, and in accordance with the urgent request of Washington on the North and Greene on the South, he had dispatched men and supplies raised in the state as rapidly as possible outside the state borders. It unfortunately happened that about this time the British officers discovered that Virginia was the breadbasket of the Revolution

and determined to lay waste to as much of it as possible. Jefferson was unable to marshal quickly forces to defend the state, and was unable to raise a hand against the invaders. In an effort to find a political goat for the humiliating position of the people, men turned to the Governor.

The bitterness and unjustness of the criticism may be judged from the fact that he has even been criticised for avoiding capture at the hands of the British dragoons who so nearly caught him at Monticello on that anxious June morning in 1781. It has been termed "fleeing from the British," as if there was sheer cowardice in the act, yet every member of the legislature in Charlottesville was guilty of the same prudent act, and every critic who bandies on the charge today would have done the same thing.

Jefferson found it necessary to appear before the Assembly, when quiet was restored, and publicly defend himself against the charges, which he did with dignity and vigor. He received a vote of confidence from that body, but his sensitive nature quivered under the unjust attacks of former friends. How much it offended him may be found in the fact that although he was elected to Congress following his retirement from the governorship, he refused to serve.

In 1783, he did go to Congress, however, and during his service at this time, became the author

of the bill for the government of the Western Territory. This act has remained the model for our territorial governments ever since. Jefferson placed in it a clause prohibiting slavery within that territory. When it is kept in mind that this territory embraced all of the western lands ceded by the states to the Federal Government, and out of which the new states, both North and South, were carved, the foresight of such a measure can be recognized by all. But the clause failed through default, not because there was any particular opposition to it. Several of the states were not represented when the vote was called, and a change of a single vote in two of the delegations would have caused its adoption. Only three of the states voted against it. Jefferson, who always had a long eye to the future, especially in the slavery question, wrote to his French friend, DeMeusnier, this prophetic statement: "The voice of a single individual would have prevented this adominable crime from spręading itself over the new country. Thus we see the fate of millions unborn hanging on the tongue of one man, and heaven was silent in that awful moment." One vote, and the Civil War could never have been fought over the slavery issue!

Shortly after this he was appointed an agent to join Franklin and Adams in Paris, in an effort to correct some of the commercial abuses under

which our commerce labored. He had been offered a post in Paris four or five times since his authorship of the Declaration, but had been constrained to refuse, even against his own personal inclination, because he desired to carry on the work for political and social reform in Virginia.

Now he eagerly seized the opportunity and tarried only four or five days before he set out for Boston. He took his daughter Martha with him, now his constant companion and great pride. Shortly after his arrival in Paris, Adams was appointed minister to Great Britain and Franklin relieved of his duties. Jefferson was appointed minister to France for a term of three years. He served with distinction and credit.

His book, "Notes on Virginia," and the passage of his bill for religious freedom in Virginia, served to give him a wide reputation on the other side of the water and he was accepted in the inner circles of the literary set and the more radical political clubs.

He greatly enjoyed his associations in the cultured capital of Europe for it conformed to his fine taste in every way. His associations with the liberals, wherein he was looked upon as a mentor and teacher, were unusually pleasing to him also.

It was during his service in France that the Constitutional Convention was held in Philadel-

phia and the new national government formally established upon its subsequent ratification.

Jefferson's enemies have carefully and deliberately cultivated the fiction that he was opposed to the adoption of that document and not in favor of a central government. They are enabled to do this because of his subsequent disagreement with Hamilton and the Federalists as to the interpretation to be placed upon the Constitution as adopted.

The charge can be disproved out of Jefferson's own writings at the time, and in a fair analysis of his own acts. Before he left Boston on his way to France, he wrote Madison: "I find the conviction growing strongly that nothing can preserve our confederacy unless the bonds of union be strengthened." In a long letter to Madison in 1787, he approved almost in every detail the proposed Constitution, certainly every vital feature of it, and in 1789 he wrote to Francis Hopkinson: "I approved from the first moment the great mass of what is in the new Constitution."

Jefferson's principal objection to the document was that he failed to find in it a Bill of Rights, specifically guaranteeing the individual rights of citizens such as freedom of speech and religion, habeas corpus, trial by jury, and the like. He did not think that these important rights should be left to be inferred. He saw danger also in the re-eligibility of Federal officers, especially the

President. He thought he might, by fair or foul means through successive elections, become a virtual dictator. Washington, himself, took a stand on the matter by the force of his example which has, to date, removed this danger. The weight of Jefferson's argument is still apparent when men contend that the President should be limited to one term.

In May, 1788, he wrote to Colonel Carrington: "I learn with great pleasure the progress of the new Constitution. The general adoption is to be prayed for, and I wait with great anxiety the news from Maryland and South Carolina, which have decided before this; and with Virginia, now in session, may give the ninth vote of approbation. There could then be no doubt of North Carolina, New York, and New Hampshire. . . . We should give Rhode Island time. I cannot conceive but that she will come to rights in the long run. Force in whatever form would be dangerous precedent."

In the fall of 1789, Jefferson requested permission to return home on a leave of absence to look after his personal affairs. He had been away five years and he was further worried because his daughter Martha had expressed a desire to enter a convent in France. His request was granted, and immediately upon landing in this country he learned that Washington had nominated him to be his Secretary of State. "When I arrived in

Norfolk," he writes, "I saw myself in the newspapers nominated to that office." And in his *Memoir*, he says: "I received it with real regret. My wish was to return to Paris where I had left my household establishment as if there myself, and to see the end of the Revolution (French), which I then thought would be certainly and happily closed within less than a year. . . . In my answer of December 15 I expressed these dispositions candidly to the President, but assured him that if it was believed I could be more useful in the administration of the government, I would sacrifice my own inclination without hesitation."

His first few months in the Cabinet were passed without serious difficulty. Contrary to the usual opinion, he did not come to the Cabinet opposed to Hamilton and his policies. His correspondence reveals that he had a high opinion of Hamilton's ability and in his *Anus*, compiled many years later, he recounts how worried Hamilton was over the passage of his bill for the assumption of debts, and how Jefferson agreed to support him and did aid in securing its passage. Later, when he found how the measure was used by the capitalists to wring an unjust profit from the unsuspecting public, he was bitter, and felt that he had been "duped." He writes: "Couriers and relay horses by land, and swift sailing pilot boats by sea, were flying in all directions. Active partners and agents

were associated and employed in every state, town, and county neighborhood, and this paper was bought up at five shillings and even as low as two shillings in the pound, before the holder knew that Congress had already provided for its redemption at par. Immense sums were thus filched from the poor and ignorant, and fortunes accumulated by those who had themselves been poor enough before. Men thus enriched by the dexterity of a leader would of course follow the chief who was leading them to fortune, and become the zealous instruments of all his enterprises."

But the real break did not come over Hamilton's financial policy in restoring the credit of the nation. Jefferson, himself, admitted that this must be restored. What Jefferson became uneasy over and finally came to oppose all of Hamilton's schemes because they seemed to him to work hand in glove with the more dangerous project of destroying the local powers of the people and transferring them to the strong central power, was the fear of "monarchy."

His observation in Europe had taught him that a strong central power, in which the people had no voice, was the most dangerous foe of liberty and the rights of citizens. Jefferson's whole fight was waged to "save the republican form of government." When Hamilton, in Cabinet meeting, turned to Jefferson, and bringing his fist down on

the table, shouted: "Your people, sir, is a great beast!" the issue was drawn then and there. And the reported comment of Hamilton, when John Adams observed that the British government, purged of its corruptions, was the most perfect government on earth—that even with its corruptions it was the most perfect government on earth!—only served to reveal to Jefferson the sinister motive back of Hamilton's acts.

Hamilton was frankly an admirer of a strong but benevolent monarchical form of government; he let it be known that the republican form of government was merely an experiment and that a strong central power must be cultivated so that if the former failed, the machinery would be created for the formation of a monarchy. Jefferson had lent his whole soul to the destruction of a landed aristocracy at the close of the Revolution and he now saw it rising up in a new form, an aristocracy of wealth, seeking to control the government and the liberties of the people through the monopoly of its funds.

When Washington signed Hamilton's national bank bill in 1791, Jefferson turned more and more in the one direction where he could look for allies in his struggle. He had been defeated in Congress and around the council table. His last resort was to the people, the small farmers, the tradesmen and artisans. In them he had exhibited the most

sublime faith ever shown by a great leader in this country, with the exception of Lincoln. He believed with all his heart that the great mass of people could be safely trusted with liberty.

He wrote: "I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. And to preserve their independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty and profusion and servitude."

About this time, the most amazing campaign ever undertaken in this country commenced. Freneau, an ardent democrat, was appointed to a clerkship in the Department of State at a salary of two hundred and fifty dollars per annum, and encouraged by Jefferson to publish a political paper known as the *National Gazette*. It launched forth into the most virulent abuse of the Secretary of the Treasury and even Washington was not spared. The editor mailed him complimentary copies and Washington was so disturbed that he "called Jefferson on the carpet" for it. "I took it his intention," Jefferson writes, "to be that I should interfere in some way with Freneau, perhaps withdraw his appointment as translating clerk to my office. But I will not do it. His paper has saved our Constitution, which was galloping fast into monarchy."

Jefferson was not above suspicion for having written some of the articles himself. Feeling ran high and the clouds of division and dissension gathered on the political horizon. Washington was greatly disturbed and his last years in the office were unhappy years to him because of the division of the country into hostile camps; he never ceased to deplore such an expediency and never reconciled himself to the idea of two parties.

The growing bitterness of the struggle soon caused Jefferson to resign his position in the Cabinet and retire to Monticello. Washington urged him to remain and he did remain longer than he had originally intended out of deference to the august chief. But he soon went back to his study on the mountain top and from it he poured out the most amazing series of political letters this country has ever seen. More than 16,000 of these have come down to us.

They exhibit an unusual political sagacity. They were the sole means on which Jefferson founded his party, and the sureness with which he worked is shown in the fact that his party was in complete control of this country for nearly half a century and at intervals since. His appeal was to the masses; his weapons, publicity and education.

Often he was in the background, his presence unknown even to his foes. Indeed, so successfully

did he cover his tracks that it was not until the country was at white heat and in an uproar, as the lines of battle tightened, that his presence did become openly identified with the new movement. His plan was to pick off a county here, a district there, then a state—until sufficient strength had been developed to win the national elections.

In the mid-term elections in Adams' administration, his power had become so great that everyone recognized that the campaign of 1800 was to be the death struggle between the two factions. Jefferson had won the vice-presidency with Adams in 1796, and from his vantage point he was in a position greatly to discomfort his enemies.

His faith in democracy because it was right, and in the common people never wavered. His optimism was sublime; nothing discouraged him. He wrote to Congressman Giles: "The tide against our Constitution is unquestionably strong, but it will turn. Everything tells me so, and every day verifies the prediction. Hold on, then, like a good and faithful seaman till our brother sailors can rouse from their intoxication and right the vessel." When a correspondent in the South suggested that the way out lay in secession, he was rebuked in these words: "A little patience and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolved, and the people recovering their true sight and restoring their government to its true

principles. . . . For this is a game where principles are at stake."

Everyone knows the result of that memorable campaign. Jefferson was subjected to the most merciless assaults. His religious beliefs were dragged into the arena and he was freely labeled "infidel," "atheist," and scoundrel. The marvel is that in that bigoted age he was enabled to win in the face of popular opposition to his religious opinions. Old women in Connecticut hid their Bibles thinking that when he became President he would order them destroyed. But he had built stronger than even his foes suspected. No attack was sufficient to destroy him, however severe. An idealist of the most "visionary" type, he revealed himself the longest-headed and most practical politician, once aroused, this nation had seen to his day, perhaps the greatest in our whole history.

What were his religious views? He took little notice of attacks on this score, but the fact that he had been author of the Virginia statute for religious freedom lent color to the attacks made upon him. A new and a sinister motive was seen behind his advocacy of this measure.

"As to the calumny of Atheism," he wrote, "I am so broken to calumnies of every kind, from every department of government, Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, and from every minion

of theirs holding office or seeking it, that I entirely disregard it. It has been so impossible to contradict all their lies, that I am determined to contradict none; for while I should be engaged with one, they would publish twenty new ones.

“Had the doctrines of Jesus been preached always as pure as they came from His lips, the whole civilized world would now have been Christian. To the corruptions of Christianity I am indeed opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself; I am a Christian in the only sense He wished any one to be; sincerely attached to His doctrines in preference to all others; ascribing to Himself every human excellence; and believing He never claimed any other.”

Again, he wrote: “The greatest of all reformers of the depraved religion of His own country was Jesus of Nazareth. Abstracting what is really His from the rubbish in which it is buried, easily distinguished by its luster from the dross of His biographers, and as separate from that as the diamond from the dunghill, we have the outlines of a system of the most sublime morality which has fallen from the lips of man; outlines which it is lamentable He did not fill up. Epictetus and Epicurus give laws for governing ourselves; Jesus a supplement of the duties and charities we owe to others.”

We know that he took the pains to compile a "Jefferson bible" in which the "dross of the biographers" was removed and only the direct sayings and teachings of Jesus retained. Copies of this book may be obtained in any book store, and an examination of one reveals the point that he makes. He was not an atheist, but he had no patience with the theological structure which had been reared upon its interpretation of Jesus' system of morality.

To a New England clergyman, he wrote: "I have never permitted myself to meditate a specific creed. These formulas have been the bane and ruin of the Christian church, its own fatal invention." In a letter to his friend, Charles Thompson, in 1816, he tells about the making of his "bible" and adds this happy phrase: "A more beautiful and precious morsel of ethics I have never seen. It is a document in proof that I am a *real* Christian, i. e., a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus, very different from the Platonists who call *me* infidel and themselves Christians and preachers of the Gospel, while they draw all their characteristic dogmas from what its author never said or saw. They have compounded from the heathen mysteries a system beyond the comprehension of man, of which the great reformer of the vicious ethics and deism of the Jews, were he

to return to earth, would not recognize one feature."

The triumph of the Jefferson party was complete. His opponents were completely turned out of the White House and Congress and retained control of the Judiciary only by a last-minute series of appointments to the bench. Disaster was averted by a narrow scratch, however, in the willingness of Burr to deadlock Congress on the chance that he might win the Presidency. But Hamilton turned his support to Jefferson, not because he loved Jefferson any more than formerly, but because he feared Burr the more of the two.

This campaign, the greatest struggle of Jefferson's long life, worked a complete transformation in national campaigns. From that day to this every election appeal has been direct to the *people*; we were definitely committed to party movements; the threat of monarchy removed (there was real evidence of it); the flagrant usurpation of Constitutional rights, as found in the Sedition Act, stopped.

He might have exhibited too much anxiety and to have entertained groundless fears, and his methods may not seem entirely scrupulous to us today, but there was nothing dishonest or base in Jefferson's character. He did not stoop to trick-

ery in winning the election, as Hamilton attempted to do in a letter to Jay, then Governor of New York.

His Presidential term was fruitful of one lasting benefit to the nation and that was the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory. The story of the manipulation and diplomacy necessary to acquire that priceless empire is too long to be recounted here, but it was the crowning achievement of his administration. It brought opposition and abuse, of course, and caused a division in his own party, but in the face of it all he played for high stakes and won.

He attempted to use the same methods in winning Florida, and failed. He breathed a spirit of war publicly and privately set about to secure Florida by bargain. This time he failed, and lost a bit of his own prestige due to the unmerciful attacks of the bitter and sarcastic John Randolph.

He attempted to carry water on both shoulders in his affair with Great Britain over the Chesapeake incident. It, too, ended in failure but not due to any particular fault of Jefferson's. Roosevelt used the same method on one or two occasions and was fortunate enough to get away with it. Jefferson's misfortune was that circumstances operated to expose his hand. His fault was an error of judgment, not that he was a hypocrite.

His last months were much beset with division and attack and one has the unmistakable impression that he left the office heartily glad to be free once more, after forty years of service to his country. "The swaggering on deck as a passenger," he wrote his son-in-law, "is so much more pleasant than climbing the ropes as a seaman."

Seventeen years were allowed him in his retirement before he passed on. His time was largely occupied in his correspondence with his two friends who followed him in the White House (Madison and Monroe) and in the establishment of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. His advice to Madison and Monroe was especially worth-while, although not always so accurate as some of his earlier prophecies. He opposed the Missouri Compromise in 1820, not because he had changed his mind on Negro slavery but because he thought he saw an effort on the part of his old Federalist foes to divide the country into factions based on geographical lines.

Monroe's famous Doctrine was directly based on a letter Jefferson wrote to him: "Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to meddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America, north and south, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe and pecu-

liarily her own. . . . I could honestly, therefore, join in the declaration . . . that we will oppose with all our means the forcible interposition of any other power, as auxiliary, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretext and most especially their (Spanish colonies) transfer to any power by conquest, coercion, or acquisition in any other way."

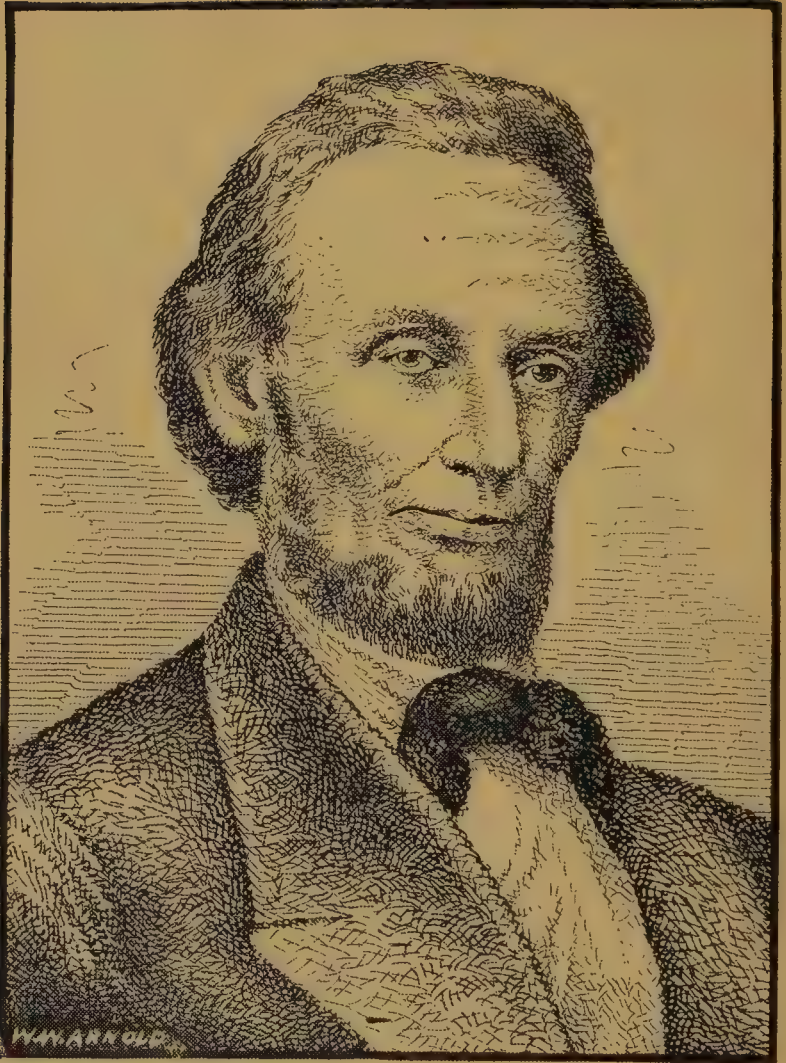
He established the University of Virginia upon broad and free lines. He wrote to a Mr. Roscoe, in 1820: "The institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error, so long as reason is left free to combat it."

It was on his monument at Monticello that I read the third achievement which he chose to have recorded there: Father of the University of Virginia.

He died, as he had lived, firm to the last in his faith in the common people but a believer in the principle that we must be eternally vigilant to preserve our liberties. His passion was freedom; in 1800 he penned a sentence to Benjamin Rush which eloquently expresses the central purpose of his whole life: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." With the last ounce

of strength in his body, he roused himself from his death sleep, to murmur: "*Warn the committee to be on the alert!*"

He died on the fourth of July, 1826, just fifty years after the Declaration of Independence, his last word an injunction that will be remembered and treasured by freemen as long as they prize their liberties.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

His melancholy rooted in an "inferiority complex" and brooding over a flaw in his family tree. He won, however, by two weeks, and the world does not yet know the full extent of his genius!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

We are beginning to see the real Lincoln. Time has softened the picture which over-zealous friends have drawn of him; the frenzy of the sentimentalists is dissipating away into thin air; the croaking of his critics has long since been stilled. Out of all this mighty torrent of Lincoln literature, the real man is beginning to take form and substance.

We see a tall and serious-minded man, sensible to the last fiber of his being of the grim realities of life; recognizing and meeting with unusual self-confidence the responsibilities heaped upon him; mindful of his limitations, but never losing sight of the goal before him.

We see a slow-moving and deliberate man, susceptible to the distinctly human temptation of laziness; a man slow to be aroused, who required constant prodding to bring to persistent action; a man who read little and thought much; a shrewd judge of human nature, and a man somewhat careless of the things that might bring him real influence.

He was a man strangely unlike what some would have us believe. His melancholy was the result of too much introspection, and not the result of a disappointed love-affair. His gravity of manner went hand in hand with it; but the real

man was more than ordinarily human. He was a great social man—loved to loiter around the court house, the village store, or wherever men congregate, swapping yarns and the small gossip of the hour. He would rather do this than be at home with his family.

Like all men who are a part of such a circle, or hang on its fringes, he never quite understood women, was somewhat afraid of them and ill at ease in their presence. He might face a hostile jury or the town bully without flinching, but before the onslaught of an infuriated woman—especially when that woman happens to be one's wife—he was helpless and sought escape by running away.

He had, therefore, a vast streak of selfishness tucked away in his long frame, whether he was conscious of it or not. He was damned by a mind that was intensely practical—of the world, the other man's world—and like all such minds it played the strange trick of being impractical in his own inner world. Nothing interested him so much as his own passionate fondness for thought—for cold analogy. His selfishness was of the sublime sort that thinks and sacrifices for others, and that very thing consigned him to the melancholy which bore him down all his days.

He was not a modest man—actually. Nor was he always a good listener. He was a good listener when his mind was closed and there was no danger

of offending. He was immodest and butted in and did the talking—when his mind was closed—and there was danger of offending. He never sought advice, as a rule. He found it unnecessary to lean upon others. He was a one-man man. He carried heavy burdens because of this tendency, because of his inability to delegate details.

He lacked system and dispatch in handling business. His hat was ever full of things to be attended to, of papers to be examined or to be delivered to someone. He didn't always direct his conversations to the point, his stories were not always worth the time they took. He was not above "swappin' yarns" in true country law-office style, while half the Congress waited in the ante-room, and a good share of the army, too. He was careless in dress and slouchy in manner. His speech was sometimes deliberately incorrect. If his hair actually lay smooth on his head, he deliberately rumbled it up with his hands. His trousers were habitually too short. He walked like a panther—stealthily, and deceived some men into thinking he was tricky.

His discomfort in the presence of ladies caused him to break up every gathering he joined by drawing the men to one corner, leaving the ladies high and dry, while he held the men with jokes and yarns. Thus, he seized the center of the social stage by transgressing the common rules of social

behavior, and gratified his amazing immodesty by taking the leadership. He was not a good follower. He lay around home on the floor, in his shirt-sleeves and stocking-feet, and when callers arrived he insisted on letting them in while he was in this garb.

In the presence of active and assertive men, he was docile, bashful, easily led. He allowed Seward to boss him unmercifully, rehearsing with him his reception of a foreign prince in advance. He doubtless resented this, being human, and privately told his wife that he intended to "fire Seward" when the war was won.

He was honest to the core. He was afraid of no man, yet insisted all his life that he was to be the victim of some terrible calamity. He cared nothing about money, little about religion. He knew some men well, and was easily taken in by others. Words and phrases greatly interested him, and he used them with greater aptness every day that went by. He had no program, save one—"to save the Union."

He was, all the way through, a human being—a man of some latent strength, but subject, nevertheless, to the doubts and delays, the fears and fancies, the diseases and distresses of most of us. There is just one curious exception and that was his narrow-gauge, slow-moving, unerring train of thought. Once he had thought a thing through, he

clung to it tenaciously. He seldom changed his mind, whether on matters of politics, philosophy, religion or ethics.

His outstanding characteristic was his deep and over-shadowing melancholy which, at times, rendered him even dangerous to himself. There is a mystery as to its cause. Many biographers have attributed it to his disastrous affair with Ann Rutledge, but forget that he also offered himself in marriage to others who turned him down. His melancholy went back deeper than the love affair with Ann Rutledge; it seems to spring out of some phase of his parentage, which he did not fully reveal and which has just been cleared up.

Herndon, who was Lincoln's last law partner, states: "Beyond the fact that he was born on the 12th day of February, 1809, in Hardin county, Kentucky, Mr. Lincoln usually had but little to say of himself, the lives of his parents, or the history of the family before their removal to Indiana. If he mentioned the subject at all, it was with great reluctance and significant reserve. There was something about his origin he never cared to dwell upon." I believe it well for us to keep the last sentence ever in mind, in our search for the real man and the explanation for the controlling mental characteristic of his life.

J. L. Scripps, a writer for the *Chicago Tribune*, desired to write a biography of Lincoln during

the campaign of 1860. The latter did all he could to discourage this, but finally furnished some data upon which the book was based. Scripps wrote to Herndon, after Lincoln's death: "Lincoln seemed to be painfully impressed with the extreme poverty of his early surroundings, and the utter absence of all romantic and heroic elements. He communicated some facts to me concerning his ancestry, which he did not wish to have published then, and which I have never spoken of or alluded to before."

But these mysterious "facts concerning his ancestry" were not revealed by Scripps before his death. It does not seem reasonable, however, that it was "the extreme poverty of his early surroundings," or the "utter absence of all romantic or heroic elements," that weighed so heavily upon his mind. Most men who smart under poverty and adversity in their early years usually take pride in these very handicaps, once they have been overcome. The self-made man is seldom, if ever, honestly ashamed of poverty. Poverty is a disgrace only when nothing is done to overcome it, and when one has overcome it, it is something to honestly pride oneself in. The same applies to the matter of station in the social scale. The "utter absence of all romantic and heroic elements" is natural in the lives of nearly everyone, and more especially in the early years. It is not the subject

of any very deep melancholy, but to be expected. Lincoln was the last man in the whole company we have discussed who would have placed any premium on the desirability of merely being born famous. The gist of that sentence, that sentence about the romantic and heroic elements, is the desire for distinction and fame. Lincoln knew human nature and history and biography well enough to know that true fame, secure fame, rests on deeds and not on the accidents of station to make it worthwhile. The suspicion lingers that there was something else which he knew, something that wounded his sensitive nature to the quick, with which he lived in almost complete secrecy all his life.

The suspicion is strengthened by the fact that during his early life, he gave little indication of rebellion against his poverty and his station in life. He is described as being extremely easy-going, careless, and as is usual in such cases, not anxious to work—willing to talk, joke and take his fun. He was a thorough-going Lincoln, son of his father, then. But when youth passed it seems likely that he came to know the mysterious thing about his ancestry which saddened him and which nerved him to fight it in secret. The reading of books about this time, broadened his mental horizon, gave him perspective, lifted him out of the little circle in New Salem, and indicated a way

out. In his early youth, carefree and not knowing the shadow, whatever it was, he was a normal, happy, careless, jovial frontier boy with an aversion for manual labor—not because he hated work or was incapable of it—but because he saw that it offered no chance for “advancement.” He also had the delightful sense of procrastination we find in irresponsible youth before the realities of life force themselves upon one. Youth can delay and put off and avoid.

Another curious point is that in a short sketch of his life furnished Jesse W. Fell in 1859, he makes only brief mention of his mother. He fails to give her maiden or Christian name, and disposes of her family in but three lines, whereas he devotes almost a page to the Lincoln family. Yet in conversation with Herndon on one occasion when he did speak of his ancestry to that close friend, he said: “among other things, that she was the *natural* daughter of Lucy Hanks and a well-bred but obscure Virginia farmer or planter; and he argued that from this last source came his power of analysis, his logic, his mental activity, his ambition, and all the qualities that distinguished him from the other members and descendants of the Hanks family.” And we are all familiar with his fine tribute to his mother, when he once publicly announced that “all I am or ever hope to be, I

owe to my angel mother," which statement he borrowed from Washington.

His early youth is probably known in greater detail to more people the world over than that of any man yet produced in this country. He, himself, summed it up for Scripps when he said that it could all be put into a single sentence and that that sentence was to be found in Gray's *Elegy*. It was: "The short and simple annals of the poor."

And yet, in all "the short and simple annals" which history has given us, there is no more of the romantic and the heroic than there is in the early life of this humble man, a rail-splitter, a day-laborer, a village storekeeper, a reader of books, who was to accomplish the most stupendous service our country has seen since its establishment.

Perhaps the most outstanding point of the whole period as he passed from youth into manhood, the point which was so greatly to influence his whole subsequent career, was the firing of his ambition and the awakening of his will to achieve something of his life, by the reading of books. His actual schooling was exceedingly indifferent; Herndon tells us that if all the days he spent in school were added together they would not possibly equal one year in total.

The very disadvantages and meagre opportunities for knowledge through books which the rude

frontier offered doubtless gave the knowledge-thirsty youth the very quality which was to so greatly distinguish him throughout his whole life. When books are few and one has the divine hunger, those books will be read and weighed and mastered. One's thoughts are centered persistently on the very few available pages until the subject matter has been probed to its depths and thought out. Lincoln was never a very prolific reader. Herndon tells us that in his later years, he never knew Lincoln to read a single book through; indeed, he read little, if anything in those days. But he adds, and this is the important point, that he "read less and thought more" than any man in the whole country.

He was trained then, in the very beginning to depend more upon his own power of analysis, to sketch out through the books that fell into his hands the general boundaries of knowledge and then fill in the details out of his own reasoning power. The subject of a book, the question under debate, was all he needed and when he had finished with it in his own mind, he had not only mastered the subject but so conclusively reasoned it through that no man was a match for him in discussing it.

He had none of the advantages that Jefferson had for a complete and well-rounded education in the classics. His knowledge of English literature was limited almost entirely to Shakespeare

and Bacon, yet what a treasure he had here. He knew Bunyan intimately, and the Bible was one of the first books he ever read. He was very well grounded on the history of the American Revolution due to his reading of Weems' "Life of Washington." To one of his mental traits a few books were worth more than a whole library. The world can be thankful for the rare vision of his step-mother who, strange indeed for that period, did everything she could to encourage him in his studies. It seems that old Thomas Lincoln, his father, took little stock in "book-larnin'."

Lincoln's step-mother, in 1865, said: "I induced my husband to permit Abe to read and study at home as well as at school. At first he was not easily reconciled to it, but finally he too seemed willing to encourage him to some extent. Abe was a dutiful son to me always, and we took particular care when he was reading not to disturb him—would let him read on and on till he quit of his own accord."

This bespeaks an understanding which should not be overlooked in tracing the development of Lincoln. I count the coming of Sarah Johnston to Spencer county, Indiana, as the second wife of Tom Lincoln, as one of the real turning points in his career. She, herself, said in 1865: "He was a good boy, and I can say what scarcely one woman—a mother—can say in a thousand, he never gave

me a cross word or look. I never gave him a cross word in all my life; his mind and mine seemed to run together. I think he loved me truly. He was the best boy I ever saw." And this from a step-mother who brought at the time, two girls and a boy of her own, to the cabin in Spencer county!

Sarah Lincoln was then thirty-one years of age, a strong, vigorous, capable woman. She had a considerable education for the time and a vision and disposition which, undoubtedly greatly influenced ten-year-old Abraham. Her nature was just the type necessary to spur him on; she had none of the melancholy traits often cropping out in his mother in her later days. She was energetic, resourceful and optimistic. She quickly understood the heart-longings of the quiet, timid, pinched boy. She rallied to the defense of his inclinations. They understood each other from the start. To him, she was "mother" and his pitiful hunger for this found complete satisfaction in her; to her, he earned by his conduct and his high-minded longing to be "somebody" a respect and deference extremely extraordinary, to say the least.

The position of the Lincolns, wretched as it was at this time, was no worse, perhaps, than that of the other families in the community. The coming of Sarah Lincoln, however, added little improvements in the way of furniture which materially improved physical comfort. The deft femin-

ine touches so long absent from the cabin made the family feel rich beyond comparison.

It is doubtless true that up to the time Sarah Lincoln came to the Lincoln household that Abraham was more of a young savage than a civilized being. It is questionable whether he had ever been clothed in other than the hides of wild beasts. We know that the Pigeon cabin was not even completed during the first winter, but was just a three-sided shelter protected on the open side by a blazing fire. When Sarah Lincoln came, the cabin had been enclosed but was without a floor.

The physical condition of the family was but one step removed from that of the savages. Carl Schurz says: "We may search in vain among our celebrities for one whose origin and early life equaled that of Abraham Lincoln in wretchedness." We know that Lincoln himself seldom spoke of this period and when he did, only in the scantest way and with evident reluctance. But it was the quick change which Sarah Lincoln wrought, slight as it was to our minds, that made such an impression upon the ten-year-old boy, touched with sorrow and a feeling of hopeless futility as he was, that fired him with the determination to better himself. Even then, that great quality of his mind in his boyhood was asserting itself. His curiosity as to what it was that made

the difference between men was demanding to be fed.

In his own autobiography, he writes of this period: "It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so-called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin' ' to the Rule of Three. If a straggler, supposed to understand Latin, happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age, I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write and cipher to the Rule of Three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity."

Probably nowhere else in his references to himself is Lincoln's "inferiority complex" better illustrated than in the above. He certainly had one, and to a marked degree. At times, all through his life, it all but overwhelmed him, and it was only his ambition, his thirst for men and his consequent discovery that he had all the latent qualities the best of them had, that lifted him above his surroundings. But even in this, he was slow and back-

ward. His ambition was not of the eager, passionate, parading type.

Again, it crops out in his first campaign speech delivered in 1832 when he was a candidate for the legislature: "Gentlemen, Fellow-Citizens: I presume you know who I am. I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by my friends to become a candidate for the Legislature. My politics can be briefly stated. I am in favor of the Internal Improvement System, and a high Protective Tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful. If not, it will be all the same."

But it did not quite overwhelm him. Gradually, he came to read and study books that fed his mind, broadened his horizon, whetted his appetite for more. He slowly emerged from boyhood into young manhood, spending his working hours as a farm hand, a ferryman, doing odd jobs of all kinds. This gave him contact with men, after which he seemed to hunger more than for anything else. His work brought him in contact with the great elemental forces, and his philosophical mind read lessons in them that clung with him all his days. Witness the flatboat, the gadfly, the lizards, the railsplitting.

Just as he was coming of age, in 1830, his father decided to move to Illinois. The decision was not the result of Tom Lincoln's shiftlessness,

as some writers contend. It seems to have been reached rather suddenly in the early winter of 1829, and in spite of the fact that Tom Lincoln was even then preparing to build a new house, with part of the lumber ready!

The immediate cause seems to have been the sudden appearance in the community of the dread disease which had made away with Nancy Hanks Lincoln some years before. It was a long hard trek, through a wilderness of forest, across almost impassable streams swollen with melting snows and spring rains, and over roads hub-deep with mud.

The first settlement was made on the Sangamon River, near Harristown. Although Lincoln was then of age and his own master before the law, he did not wish to leave his parents until they were settled. He aided in erecting the cabin and in clearing a ten-acre patch of corn land.

The following year he made his first flatboat journey to New Orleans with produce for Daniel Offutt, in company with John Hanks and one or two others. Here he visited the slave market and the vivid memory of the vigorous and comely mulatto girl he saw sold there ever clung in his mind, and called forth from him on the spot his famous declaration on the iniquitous institution.

Upon his return from New Orleans, he entered his storekeeping career and plunged with real

earnestness into his studies again. He had seen the outside world; he had met men above him in life and the difference, so far as he could see, was a difference in knowledge. He must learn more.

For six years, he remained in New Salem and vicinity, clerking in Offutt's store, serving a few months in the Black Hawk War, engaged in store-keeping on his own account, doing odd jobs, extending his studies and acquaintances among people. It was during this time that his attachment for Ann Rutledge brought the first real bit of color and romance into his life.

I have always felt that the Ann Rutledge legend has been vastly overdone by Lincoln's many biographers. Their "disease of admiration" to which Macaulay sneeringly refers is nowhere more apparent than here. In their effort to attach romance to his melancholy personal life, they quite overshoot the mark and render themselves unconvincing.

We cannot doubt that Lincoln was sincerely attached to Ann Rutledge, and that love had come to him at last. That he suffered intensely when she died is thoroughly natural under the circumstances. But when his grief is used, and the familiar details of it spread before us in an effort to prove that it brought him to the verge of insanity, we must protest. I have known men, in the midst of such grief, to be restrained only by the

utmost exertion of several friends, from leaping frantically into the open graves of their beloved wives—yet Time soothed and healed their wounds and they came, in after years, to mend again the broken hearthstones in a new love. What men do under the weight of great grief is no evidence whatever of even “bordering” on insanity!

Nor do I think the inference that the loss of Ann Rutledge explains Lincoln’s deep and abiding melancholy is correctly drawn. It was more deep-seated than that; indeed, evidences of it are to be found in him long before he ever knew Ann Rutledge!

Lincoln’s melancholy, in my judgment, was due to his “inferiority complex” which rooted itself in his knowledge of his mother’s origin. He is ever assailed with the conviction that he is not made of the stuff other men are. He insists, needlessly at times, in building up a wall between his own qualifications and those of other, and less worthy men. I believe it found its original impulse when he became acquainted with the defect in his family tree on the maternal side. It was encouraged by the loss of his mother and his sweetheart, by the sense of utter futility in struggling against the unseen forces, the bitterness of wilderness life and the wretchedness of his early surroundings.

He suffers for months from the feeling that he is not qualified to study law because of the defects

in his education. But still he dallies with the dream until, confiding it to his friend and fellow-Whig, Major John T. Stuart, the latter offered him the use of his books and to lay out a course of study for him. This he eagerly accepted. And later, all through his career as a lawyer, we find him telling some friend that he must go back home and study more law, make himself a better lawyer. He had the nervous, infectious ambition of the man who gets ahead, but it was handicapped by his strange sense of modesty.

His relation to women has never ceased to be of interest to his biographers. There seems to be little doubt but that he exhibited the usual, normal interest in the pretty girls crossing his path, from his boyhood days in Indiana, until he met Mary Todd, that is to be expected of a young man. We are sure that he proposed to no less than three women, Ann Rutledge, Mary Owen and Mary Todd. It is claimed that there were others. He had his "affairs" with girls, but they were not any more serious than can be found in the life of any ordinary, healthy boy. He even fights over some of them, as when at a husking bee in Indiana he chose to kiss another boy's girl upon drawing a red ear of corn!

That he ever had any real attachment for Mary Owen does not seem to be the case. Indeed, the whole affair seems to have gained an undue im-

portance in his own mind merely because of his own exalted value of a joking promise delivered, not to the lady herself, but to her sister! Indeed, he plainly angles for release in a letter written to her, which also expresses the whole of his attitude towards women:

“I want in all cases to do right, and more particularly in all cases with women. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me I am now willing to release you, provided you wish it, while on the other hand I am willing and anxious to bind you faster if I can be convinced that it will in any considerable degree add to your happiness. This indeed is the whole question with me. If it suits you best not answer this, . . . a long life and a merry one attend you.”

Naturally, the “engagement” was broken off, forthwith. The lady subsequently remarked that “he was deficient in those little links which make up the chain in a woman’s happiness.” This was doubtless true to one of his mental characteristics, but that he was rough, uncouth and without the attributes of a real gentleman, is not true.

A Mrs. Jane Martin Johns, who lived in Decatur and knew him during his circuit riding days, in her “Recollections,” states:

“When I first knew Lincoln the ungainliness of the pioneer if he ever had it, had worn off and his manner was that of a gentleman of the old school,

unaffected, unostentatious, who 'arose at once when a lady entered the room, and whose courtly manners would put to shame the easy-going indifference to etiquette which marks the twentieth century gentleman.'

"His dress, like his manner, was suited to the occasion, but was evidently a subject to which he gave little thought. It was certainly unmarked by any notable peculiarity. It was the fashion of the day for men to wear large shawls, and Mr. Lincoln's shawl, very large, very soft, and very fine, is the only article of his dress that has left the faintest impression on my memory."

Herndon's story about the breaking off of Lincoln's engagement to Mary Todd, highly colored as it is by the dramatic clothes in which he invests it, is not altogether convincing. Indeed, Miss Tarbell has taken the pains to rather puncture it with an amazing array of evidence from first-hand sources.

Herndon tells us that Lincoln left Mary Todd "waiting at the church," as it were—that the invitations to the wedding were out, the guests assembled and the supper ready—but that Lincoln did not appear. He then states that when a search for him was instituted, he was found in the early hours of the morning in a deserted barn, overwhelmed with grief. For this "humiliation," he accounts for their unhappy domestic life after they were married later.

It is true that the engagement was "broken" or postponed, for more than a year, but all of Mary Todd's relatives indignantly denied the story as Herndon gave it to the world. Lincoln's melancholy and illness, which caused the postponement of his marriage, can be explained I think by his old "inferiority complex." For months, he was in doubt whether he could make the girl happy. He was sensible of the differences in their stations in life, of his own background and this is doubtless the whole explanation of the matter.

Herndon claims it is the root of the unhappy domestic life the man experienced; claims it accounts for Mary Todd's high-strung disposition towards Lincoln. Then he admits that he does not blame her because Lincoln's preoccupation in his work, his love for the society of men, his deficiency in the little traits of attentiveness which go so far in smoothing domestic ills, certainly justified her.

Mr. Henry Ford, in a conversation with the author in October, 1923, cited this as proof of his sweeping assertion that "love was not essential for a successful marriage!" Said Mr. Ford: "Mary Todd boasted that she would marry a future president of the United States. If it hadn't been for Mary Todd's nagging tongue, Lincoln would have been content to be an easy-going, country lawyer.

"She drove him out of the house, and he got to

thinking about *slavery* and that sent him straight to the White House! Thus, Lincoln was forced to make the most of himself, he got a chance to 'hit' the thing he had always wanted to hit, and Mary Todd got what she wanted. It is time the nagging tongue got its dues!"

We do not doubt but that Lincoln had his uncomfortable hours at home. He was easy-going at times and thoroughly exasperating when he loafed about the house in his shirt-sleeves and stocking feet. No doubt, at times, Mary Todd reminded him of her Kentucky ancestry and of the days when she did not have to work so hard—which cut his sensitive nature in its most sensitive part—but we cannot escape the conviction, if we care anything for character analysis at all, that most of the unhappiness that came to Lincoln was distinctly his own inferior mental slant getting the best of him. Probably, he had no more lack of sympathy and understanding at home than hundreds of other busy men have had.

Mary Todd is not to be condemned. Too long her memory has been surrounded by this unkind picture which Herndon and others have left behind. It has always seemed that the more the Ann Rutledge sentimentality has been projected beyond the bounds of reason, the more unkind it has been to Mary Todd. She loved Abraham Lincoln passionately and devotedly. Her very

criticism of him springs out of that root-cause. She loved him much more passionately and devotedly—more completely—than one of his calm, deliberate, analytical mind was capable of returning or showing. That he pined throughout his days, and was weighed down because of the loss of Ann Rutledge, is the flimsiest conjecture.

The claim that Mary Todd was responsible for Lincoln's political success, as indicated above, is not altogether fair to Lincoln. Those who advance this theory overlook the fact that Lincoln had already served several terms in the legislature and was a candidate for Congress before he married Miss Todd. His political ambition had, therefore, been awakened long before meeting her. That she naturally strengthened him in his ambition, is not to be denied, but it seems much nearer the truth and much more chivalrous to think that her promptings were more in the nature of friendly, intimate understanding than in the nature of bitter, resentful tongue-lashings.

Lincoln's sense of humor, and his gift for story-telling, undoubtedly saved him from ruin. His natural love for horseplay and fun saved him from himself; his gift of story-telling made him exceedingly popular with his friends and is the one quality which posterity has most enthusiastically admired in him. He was often taken to task not only for the trait, but for the kind of stories he

told. He justified himself, on one occasion, in this way:

“If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth.”

We know that his stories were used with telling effect and seldom, if ever, did he fail to carry his point. They formed in his hands the most convincing points in his arguments. His speeches fairly bristle with homely simile and anecdote, and go a long way in explaining the rapt attention he always commanded whether on the platform or in the court room. Horace White, who reported his debates with Douglas for the *Chicago Tribune*, says:

“I never knew a man who would bring more men of doubtful or hostile leanings around to his way of thinking by talking to them on a platform. After listening to him a few minutes, when he got well warmed up with his subject, nobody would mind whether he was graceful or not. All thought of grace or form was lost in the exceeding attractiveness of what he was saying.”

He was a master of every type of humor, and most effective in his use of satire and sarcasm. One of the best examples is his speech delivered while in Congress in which he defended General Taylor, the Whig candidate, and paid his respects

to General Cass, the Democratic candidate. The following extract is a good sample of Lincoln at his best:

“But I have introduced General Cass’ accounts here, chiefly to show the wonderful physical capacities of the man. They show that he not only did the labor of several men at the same time, but that he often did it at several places many hundred miles apart, at the same time. And at eating, too, his capacities are shown to be quite as wonderful. From October, 1821, to May, 1822, he ate ten rations a day in Michigan, ten rations a day here in Washington, and near five dollars’ worth a day besides, partly on the road between the two places.

“And then there is an important discovery in his example—the art of being paid for what one eats, instead of having to pay for it. Hereafter, if any nice man shall owe a bill which he cannot pay in any other way, he can just board it out.

“Mr. Speaker, we have all heard of the animal standing in doubt between two stacks of hay, and starving to death; the like of that would never happen to General Cass. Place the stacks a thousand miles apart, he would stand stock-still, midway between them, and eat both at once; and the green grass along the line would be apt to suffer some, too, at the same time. By all means, make him President, gentlemen. He will feed you bounteously—if—if there is any left after he shall have helped himself.”

He had a marked ability for drawing figures

and turning sentences that stuck in the minds of his audiences. One spectator has said that Judge Douglas' method was that of appealing to the ear with the ease of his words, and to the eye by the grace of his manners. It was the method of the average orator. Lincoln, on the other hand, appealed to the mind by the soundness of his logic, clothing his points in simple, earnest, unaffected language—polishing off with a quaint turn familiar in the experience of all. He thus contrived to keep his points in the minds of his hearers, whereas they soon forgot just what it was that Douglas had said. And, as Lincoln hemmed Douglas in, the impression steadily grew that he was right and that Douglas was wrong.

His mind traveled slowly, but unerringly, to its conclusion and once he had made up his mind it was almost impossible to change it. When he was taken to task by an associate for not speaking with more vim in the court room, he replied: "Give me your little penknife with its short blade, and hand me that old jackknife, lying on the table." He opened the blade of the penknife and said: "You see this blade on the point travels rapidly, but only through a small portion of space till it stops, while the long blade of the jackknife moves no faster but through a much greater space than the small one. Just so with the long-labored movements of the mind. I cannot emit ideas as rapidly

as others because I am compelled by nature to speak slowly, but when I do throw off a thought it comes with some effort, it has force to cut its own way and travels a greater distance."

Lincoln was seldom aroused, in his mental processes, unless some moral question was involved in the issue. Technicalities irked him, and it seems that he would rather argue a case on a broad moral ground than on the narrow ground of legal precedent and technicality. He once observed: "If I can free this case from technicalities and get it properly swung to the jury, I'll win it." He always argued, when aroused, "on the presumption that the court did not know anything."

His method cannot be better illustrated than by an examination of his notes for his argument in a case where there was an attempt to defraud a soldier's widow of her pension. They are:

"No contract—Not professional services—Unreasonable charge—Money retained by Def., not given by Pl'ff — Revolutionary War — Describe Valley Forge privations—Ice—Soldiers' Bleeding Feet—Pl'ff Husband—Soldier leaving home for Army—Skin def't—Close."

That he had a strong moral sense is unquestioned. He was honest to the core, not only in returning overcharges or paying by hard labor for a damaged book, but in his argument of cases or political issues. He could not stoop to trickery.

It was his ability to expose Douglas' verbal trickery which gave him the advantage over that capable adversary. And Lincoln was never so irritated in their debates as when Douglas sought to insinuate something concerning Lincoln which reflected on his moral qualities.

So great was his moral sense that he was willing, in the winning of a cause he considered right, to sink himself for all time if he could but overthrow in the end the wrong as he saw it. That was the entire reason why he lost the contest with Douglas, at least its temporary prize.

We have already noted how he considered himself bound to Mary Owen when any other man would not have been such a strict constructionist of a joking remark. It was his strict moral sense again. When in Congress, he refused to allow his friends to boom him for re-election because he had given his word that he would take but one term.

Indeed, this sense of honor is what caused him to enter his famous duel with Shields. This episode is not only illustrative of that point, but also affords a fine example of his inborn sense of humor. Miss Mary Todd had, during the interval when their engagement was broken off, taken up her pen and contributed to a local paper a few articles assailing Shields, then auditor of state.

Shields vowed that if he could discover the author, he would force an answer on the "field of

honor." When the contest got too hot and Miss Todd was in danger of being discovered, Lincoln came forward and assumed responsibility for the articles. Being challenged, he had the right to select the weapons. Here his sense of humor turned what might have been a serious affair into something of a joke. He specified cavalry sabres of the broadest and longest blades. When it is kept in mind that Shields was a little man who could walk under Lincoln's outstretched arm, the humor of the situation of these two men proposing to fight a duel with such weapons is better appreciated.

A sandbar near the city of Alton was selected. It is said that when the participants arrived and were getting ready for the combat, Lincoln took his saber, soberly ran his thumb along the edge to test its keenness, then reached up with his long arm and clipped twigs off a branch of a tree so high no one else could reach it! Fortunately, friends headed off the combat before it actually took place. But the episode caused no little stir in the state and was somewhat injurious to Lincoln's political popularity for some time, as duelling was out of favor at that time. Years later, Lincoln was extremely mortified when it was referred to in his presence.

He succeeded in swinging the great issue between the "Little Giant" and himself, as a ques-

tion of right and wrong. Witness how he defines the issue in his speech at Alton:

“The real issue in this controversy—the one pressing upon every mind—is the sentiment on the part of one class that looks upon the institution of slavery as a wrong, and of another class that does not look upon it as a wrong. The sentiment that contemplates the institution of slavery in this country as a wrong is the sentiment of the Republican party. It is the sentiment around which all their actions, all their arguments, circle; from which all their propositions radiate. They look upon it as being a moral, social and political wrong; and while they contemplate it as such they nevertheless have due regard for its actual existence among us, and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and to all the constitutional obligations thrown about it. Yet having a due regard for these, they desire a policy in regard to it that looks to its not creating any more danger. They insist that it, as far as may be, be treated as a wrong, and one of the methods of treating it as a wrong is to make provision that it shall grow no larger.

“That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles — right and wrong — throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine

right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says: 'You toil and work and earn bread and I'll eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle."

In the first debate at Ottawa, he had paved the way for arguing his cause on a broad moral ground, by saying:

"Judge Douglas is going back to the era of our Revolution, and, to the extent of his ability, muzzling the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return. When he invites any people, willing to have slavery, to establish it, he is blowing out the moral lights around us. When he says he 'cares not whether slavery is voted down or voted up'—that it is a sacred right of self-government—he is, in my judgment, penetrating the human soul, and eradicating the light of reason and the love of liberty in this American people."

Lincoln did not conceal his position in regard to the social and political equality of negroes. "I am opposed to negro suffrage," he said, "and am not in favor of negro jury service; I recognize the fact that between the whites and negroes there exists a physical difference which will probably forever forbid their living together upon the foot-

ing of perfect equality; but in the right to eat the bread his own hands earn he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas and the equal of every living man." Again, he said: "I don't understand that because I don't want a negro woman for a slave, I must necessarily want her for a wife."

His logic, in argument, is as irresistible as his humor and his aptness for illustration. Consider the power of this paragraph:

"A man cannot prove a negative, but he has a right to claim that when a man makes an affirmative charge, he must offer some proof to show the truth of what he says. I certainly cannot introduce testimony to show the negative about things, but I have a right to claim that if a man says he knows a thing, then he must show how he knows it. I always have a right to claim this, and it is not satisfactory to me that he may be conscientious on the subject."

The same power is brought to bear, when he speaks to the South, in the gathering storm of Secession:

"Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and a wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must

continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you."

His "house divided against itself" is not only sound logic, but a figure that stuck and won multitudes to his way of thinking. His utterances, his letters abound with similar instances of the unerring quality of his mind. He thought things through and arguing on the broad ground he always sought, he was bound to win. This is the secret of Lincoln's success, the explanation of his power.

He was not only a sound thinker, but an uncommonly shrewd judge of men. All his life he seemed to hunger after the society of men. We find him all through his years of preparation, from the time he commenced his clerkship in New Salem, through his law days and his circuit-riding days, seeking out the places where men gathered together.

Stanton, with whom he had many a tilt, observed, when he lay dead in the house opposite

Ford's Theater: "There lies the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen."

Many men, even those in daily contact with him, mistook his easy ways, his patience in seeing and hearing all who wished to see him, for indecision and inefficiency. Within thirty days after his administration was launched, we find Seward drawing up a letter which set out the "failures" the administration had made and blandly suggesting that the Secretary of State would be willing to rescue it and the country. But Lincoln overlooked it and retained Seward for his talents and political support. He had plenty of trouble getting the best out of his cabinet members. Stanton, Chase and Seward caused him almost continual embarrassment and anxiety. No president ever was as patient and long-suffering.

Everywhere, in almost every crisis during those long, weary four years, we find him gently but firmly holding the factions together; standing as as the one necessary mind amid all the confusion and strife that held the army, the civil government and the nation together. The more we inquire into the period, the more indispensable Lincoln seems. One shudders to think what would have happened had he been taken out of this earthly scene in the first or second year of his tenure in office. His every act in this period justi-

fied the estimate Stanton placed upon him as a ruler of men.

Herndon claims that Lincoln always insisted that some sinister fate would overtake him, but we cannot be sure of it. It seems true, however, that the possibility of assassination was in his mind, and in the mind of his wife at times. He explained his carrying a cane to a friend by saying that his wife feared he would be assassinated and that he carried it for protection. And it seems that while out riding on horseback one day, someone fired a shot at him which punctured his hat. But there is no evidence to show that Lincoln had any feeling on the subject the last few days he spent on earth. He was unusually good-natured and happy. He smiled and joked much and seemed particularly light-hearted.

I have in my possession an autographed account of his last hours on earth, prepared by James Tanner, the clerk who took down in shorthand the evidence collected that night, while Lincoln lay dying. Corporal Tanner is the sole living person present on that sad occasion, and I quote extracts from this statement for the intimate details they give of that scene:

“Several times Mr. Stanton left us a few moments and passed back to the room in the ell at the end of the hall where the President lay. The doors were open and sometimes there would be a

few seconds of absolute silence when we could hear plainly the stertorous breathing of the dying man. I think it was on his return from his third trip of this kind when, as he again took his seat opposite me, I looked earnestly at him, desiring yet hesitating to ask if there was any chance of life. He understood and I saw a choke in his throat as he slowly forced the answer to my unspoken question,—‘There-is-no-hope.’ He had impressed me through those awful hours as being a man of steel but I knew then that he was dangerously near a convulsive breakdown.

“I have seen many assorted pictures of the deathbed scene and most of them have Vice-President Andrew Johnson seated in a chair near the foot of the bed on the left side. Mr. Johnson was not in the house at all but in his rooms in the Kirkwood House and knew nothing of the events of that night ’til he was aroused in the morning by Senator Stewart and others and told that he was President of the United States.

“With the completion of the taking of testimony I at once began to transcribe my notes into longhand. Twice while so engaged, Miss Harris supported Mrs. Lincoln down the hallway to her husband’s bedside. The door leading into the hallway from the room wherein I sat was open and I had a plain view of them as they slowly passed. Mrs. Lincoln was not at the bedside when her husband breathed his last. Indeed, I think, it was nearly if not quite two hours before the end, when she paid her last visit to the death chamber and when she passed our door on her return, she

cried out, 'Oh! my God and have I given my husband to die!'

"I have witnessed and experienced much physical agony on the battlefield and in the hospital but of it all, nothing sunk deeper in my memory than that moan of a breaking heart.

"I finished transcribing my notes at six forty-five in the morning and passed back into the room where the President lay. There were gathered all those whose names I have mentioned and many others—about twenty or twenty-five in all, I should judge. The bed had been pulled out from the corner and owing to the stature of Mr. Lincoln, he lay crosswise on his back. He had been utterly unconscious from the instant the bullet ploughed into his brain. His stertorous breathing subsided a couple of minutes after seven o'clock. From then to the end only the gentle rise and fall of his bosom gave indication that life remained.

"The Surgeon-General was near the head of the bed, sometimes sitting on the edge thereof, his finger on the pulse of the dying man. Occasionally, he put his ear down to catch the lessening beats of his heart. Mr. Lincoln's pastor, the Reverend Dr. Gurley, stood a little to the left of the bed. Mr. Stanton sat in a chair near the foot on the left, where the pictures place Andrew Johnson. I stood quite near the head of the bed and from that position had full view of Mr. Stanton across the President's body. At my right, Robert Lincoln sobbed on the shoulder of Charles Sumner.

"Stanton's gaze was fixed intently on the countenance of his dying Chief. He had, as I said,

been a man of steel throughout the night but as I looked at his face across the corner of the bed and saw the twitching of the muscles I knew that it was only by a powerful effort that he restrained himself. The first indication that the dreaded end had come was at twenty-two minutes past seven when the Surgeon-General gently crossed the pulseless hands of Lincoln across the motionless breast and rose to his feet.

“Reverend Dr. Gurley stepped forward and lifting his hands began, ‘Our Father and our God,’—I snatched pencil and notebook from my pocket but my haste defeated my purpose. My pencil point (I had but one) caught in my coat and broke, and the world lost the prayer,—a prayer which was only interrupted by the sobs of Stanton as he buried his face in the bedclothes. As ‘Thy will be done, Amen,’ in subdued and tremulous tones floated through that little chamber, Mr. Stanton raised his head, the tears streaming down his cheeks. A more agonized expression I never saw on a human countenance as he sobbed out the words, ‘He belongs to the ages now.’

“Mr. Stanton directed Major Thomas M. Vincent of the Staff to take charge of the body, called a meeting of the Cabinet in the room where we had passed most of the night and the assemblage dispersed.”

If Fate were kind to Abraham Lincoln, as some have claimed, she was infinitely more kind to the nation he loved so well when she spared him until the paramount object of his life—“to save the

Union"—had been accomplished. But the qualities that made Lincoln beloved as no man ever has been in this country did not depend upon the tragedy of April 14, 1865, for their immortal luster. They were in the man's own soul, of his own winning through long patient years of effort and toil, and not even the assassin's bullet could blot them out.

COMPARISON OF THOMAS JEFFERSON AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln were the two first great popular champions in the United States to build up a real personal following and achieve political success for what they contended. We are not unmindful of Andrew Jackson, but his following was not of the type of either of these two men. He won more because of his military popularity than because he came before the country with a constructive or unique political program.

Both Jefferson and Lincoln were party organizers in the larger sense and were the first of their respective parties to enter the White House. Each stood for great social reforms; each were practical idealists. Jefferson was more of a wholesale reformer than Lincoln, and interested himself in many directions.

In spite of the fact that their successes were won in the same general field of public effort, there were many contrasts in their methods and characters. The first great contrast is to be drawn in their background and training.

Jefferson was an aristocrat in blood and breeding. He enjoyed all the advantages of wealth. He had a profound classical education. He could

spend five years in the study of the law, after his classical education was completed before he was under the necessity of applying for admission to the bar. He enjoyed throughout his life the advantages of travel and contact with the great and the cultured. He spent much time in Paris, the cultural capital of the world.

Lincoln, on the other hand, came into the world without the advantage of station or influential relatives. His background was that of the rude and uncouth frontier. He faced life at scratch and had to wage a long and desperate struggle with it at first hand for the bare necessities. When Jefferson was attending lectures at Williamsburg, amid all the gay and sheltered scenes of that aristocratic capital, Lincoln was, at the same age, building his first flatboat and speculating on taking "a barrel or two" of produce to distant New Orleans. He had barely earned his first dollar.

He enjoyed none of the advantages of travel. The cultured and educated belonged to another world. Up to the time he was married, at thirty-four, his travel had consisted of two flatboat journeys to New Orleans, which he earned with the toil of his own hands. His other journeys were the wilderness jaunts with his parents in search of better living conditions.

Another contrast, dependent on the one above, is the age at which they came before the public.

Jefferson is in Congress when only thirty-two years of age, already a considerable figure before the country because of his political writings—considerable enough that he is given the vantage point in the committee appointed to draw up the immortal Declaration.

Lincoln did not win any great national reputation until his debates with Douglas, just two years before he entered the contest for the presidency. True, he had served a term in Congress during the Mexican War, but it had been disappointing even to his constituency. He had, in spite of his efforts, remained "submerged," as Douglas put it.

Another contrast is found in their methods. Lincoln enjoyed the society of men, gloried in forensic contest and loved to match his wits against others where he could argue on the side of the question that appealed to his moral sense. He was not afraid of physical encounter and enjoyed tests of his physical strength.

Jefferson shrank from public debate and was positively unable to engage in physical contests at all. He was not always in the open, nor above board in his methods. He seemed to shrink from the spotlight and greatly preferred to remain in the background when waging some of his greatest contests. In spite of his youth, his health, his wealth—he did not join the army and fight for

the political principles he so ably announced through his pen to the world.

Lincoln, so far as we know, never engaged in an unworthy contest or indulged in personalities. In spite of the grave personal faults of Judge Douglas, he never stooped, in his contest with him, to reference to them. Jefferson, on the other hand, projected on the platform of the country's political discussion, the most hateful and passionate invective and insinuation against a fellow Cabinet member, Colonel Hamilton.

Both were masters of the pen, when it came to a clear-cut pronouncement of their political principles. Lincoln found his avenue of expression through the platform; Jefferson through committee resolutions and pamphlets. Their minds ran together in these fundamental principles. Lincoln declared again and again, in his slavery debates, that his whole political creed was found in the Declaration itself. He held it the fountainhead of political wisdom.

Their personal morals, in spite of the times in which they lived, were beyond question. Both were without fault in their conduct towards women. Both respected the sanctity of the family relation. Both were visited by personal sorrow—Jefferson, in the loss of his wife—Lincoln, in the loss of mother, sweetheart and children.

In mental characteristics, Jefferson had the

more normal and wholesome viewpoint. He was not morbid nor melancholy, as was Lincoln; he did not swing to the mental extremes Lincoln did. Lincoln was either in the depths or full of hilarity and horseplay. Jefferson had the more even mental keel.

Lincoln's was a single-track mind, in that he had one theme; Jefferson interested himself in many political reforms, and dozens of other questions. He was accomplished in music, in agriculture, in architecture and the arts. These were practically closed books to Lincoln.

Both were patriots. Although their routes widely differed, they both contended for the better interests of their country. In actual ends accomplished they were on the opposite sides of the political fence. Jefferson stood as the champion of local government; Lincoln's efforts tended to strengthen and entrench the national government.

On the slavery question, they were agreed. Jefferson abhorred the institution fully as much as Lincoln did, and sought to curb it many times, but usually failed.

As leaders of men, both were successful. As executives, Lincoln was undoubtedly superior. He understood men better and since he was incapable of reducing an argument to personalities, or of bitterness himself, he had a great advantage in

handling men. He took men for the good they would accomplish and overlooked their faults.

In personal appearance, there was a great contrast between them. Jefferson was democratic in principle, but was a handsome man and a careful, even studied, dresser. Lincoln was neither handsome nor exceedingly careful of his appearance. He had none of the little arts of society.

Jefferson, as a man of the world of affairs, was doubtless the superior, but his weaknesses were likewise the weaknesses of a man of affairs. He was broader in his interests, but he lacked the depth of moral sense Lincoln possessed. And because of it, Lincoln was the stronger character.

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